POEMS.

POEMS

BY

CHARLES HENRY ST. JOHN.

"What is life without a heart to feel
"The great and lovely, and the poetry
"And sacredness of things?"

FESTUS.

Data Fata Secutus.

BOSTON:
A. WILLIAMS AND COMPANY,
100 WASHINGTON STREET.
M DCCC LIX.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1859,

BY CHARLES HENRY ST. JOHN,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

GEO. C. RAND & AVERY, PRINTERS, 3 CORNHILL, BOSTON.

TO

PHILIP HENRY GOSSE, ESQ., F.R.S., F.L.S., &c.

AS A TRIBUTE FROM ONE WHOM HE CARESSED IN CHILDHOOD,

AND IN TOKEN OF FAMILY ASSOCIATIONS AND

PERSONAL RESPECT,

This Little Volume

IS MOST CORDIALLY INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.

[ADVERTISEMENT.]

THE following effusions would scarcely have been published in their present form, were it not for the favorable notices that many of them received as they appeared in the newspapers both here and in the Provinces. The author is, at the same time, aware that more indulgence is usually shown to productions of an ephemeral nature than to that "serious affair — a volume," when formally offered for public patronage.

The greater number, however, of the ensuing pieces appear now for the first time in print; — some of these, it is hoped, will be found not inferior to those already published.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
INSCRIPTION	v
ADVERTISEMENT	vii
POEMS :	
The Child-Poet's Wreath	13
The Withered Rose	17
The Old Times and the New	19
Lines to Spring	21
The Eagle-Eyed	25
Flowers	28
The Lost Love	29
Motherless	30
The Lone Flower	32
"Coming Events"	33
The Exiled Minstrel's Legacy	35
Changed	37
There 's a Pathway before us through Life	38
Hope in the Future	39
Pleasure	40
The Belle of the Ball Room	41
Day-Dreams	43
A Vesper Fragment	44
Farewell to Terra Nova	46

Page.

Memories 48
To Terra Nova 49
One Word more 51
I could not say "Good Night!" 52
The Reply 54
"Killed and Wounded" 55
The Song of Peace 57
The Star of Bethlehem 59
The Sailor Boy and the Bird of Passage 62
Sonnet 63
Castles in the Air 64

EXTRACTS FROM A POEM:

I. Spiritualism 65
II. Our Age 66
III. Friendship 67
IV. Love and Learning 67

The Sailor's Song to the Moon 68
One Song for thee before I rest 69
The Drowned Boy 70
The First Snow-Flake 71
Harvard 72
Gone 73
"Il Penseroso" 74
The Printer 76
Faust 78
Willie's Grave 81
The Stars 84
Friendless 87
The Strange Old Bark 89
The Eve of the Golden Wedding 90
The Feathered Eremite 93
The Last of the Red Indian Warriors 97
Claribel 99
To Genius 102

Page.

FRAGMENTS OF AN UNFINISHED POEM :

Morning 104
Beauty 105
Joy in the Beautiful 107
The Rest-Day 108
Memory 109
Thoughts on Death 112
Thoughts in Church 114
Wealth 116
Life 117
The Angel-Whisper 118
Midnight 119

THE MISANTHROPE MELTED 120

Maiden Longings 128
Nature and Art 130
Death and the Woodman 131
The Twin Trees 132
To a Jug 134
Too Late! 137
In Affliction 138
The Last Lay 139
L' Envoi 141

POEMS.

THE CHILD-POET'S WREATH.

> Sæpe pater dixit, studium quid inutile tentas?
> Mæonides nullas ipse reliquit opes —
> Sponte sua carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos.
> Et quod conabar scribere, versus erat.
>
> OVID.

I.

BESIDE a stream the Poet-child
Sat wreathing wild-flowers, day by day;
And casting them, in seeming play,
Upon the current, sweetly smiled
To see them gently float away!

II.

And though, sometimes, a passing shade
May dim the lustre of his eye,
And from his trembling lip, a sigh
Breathe softly; yet, the chaplet made,
He joys to see it sailing by.

III.

"What means this strange and lone delight,—
And not unmixed with care and pain?
These pretty labors are in vain,
Since, but one moment in thy sight,
They pass, and ne'er are seen again!"

IV.

"Nay, stranger, nay; to some far land—
Some distant clime, beyond the sea—
Unknown alike to you and me—
The waves may lay them on the strand,
And every flower a blessing be."

V.

"Fair child, what knowest thou of the deep—
The desolate, lone, devouring main?
Thou ne'er mayest find thy wreaths again;
And Age for wasted hours will weep,
And own this pretty labor vain."

VI.

"Nay, stranger, nay; on that far land,
Some pensive soul—some lonely eye
Bedimmed with tear-drops—may espy,
Perchance, a garland on the sand,
And, in delight, forget to sigh.

VII.

"And with the wreath a flood of thought
Pour through the channel of his mind —
A thought with every leaf entwined,
And wisdom, sweeter since unsought,
Instruct the heart to be resigned."

VIII.

"Thou artless child, there is no soil,
No mead, that doth not bear a flower —
For such the universal dower
Kind Heaven hath given to cheer our toil —
As freely as the vernal shower!"

IX.

"Yes, stranger, yes; but men do tread
Upon these lavish gifts of Love,
And know not they are from above!
They must be gathered, wreathed and read,
Before they may a blessing prove. —

X.

"They *must* be gathered, wreathed, and read!
They speak a language to the mind —
Or high or low, untaught, refined; —
And yet these leaves may lay outspread
In vain, be there no hand to bind."

XI.

"No hand to bind? Where'er a flower
May bloom, there 'll be an eye to heed
Its beauty; and a mind to read
Its inner meaning; and a power
To pluck it and to bind, if need."

XII.

"True, stranger, true! And God to me
Hath given that power, that eye, that mind;
And placed me here to pluck and bind
These simple flow'rets, and to be
Their humble bearer to mankind!"

THE WITHERED ROSE.

I.

I came in the evening, the bud was just bursting;
'T was a rose in full bloom when I came the next morn;
At mid-day I saw it, 't was fading and thirsting;
At evening again, but its beauty was shorn!

II.

I looked on the turf where its petals were lying,
All sprinkled with dew-drops, but sprinkled too late;
I hearkened, and lo, the soft breezes were sighing
This tear-moving requiem over its fate:

III.

"Ah, naught can restore thee, thou sweet, fallen flower!
The sentence pronounced against Eden of old,
Denies to the dews and the sunshine the power,
Thy leaflets once perished again to unfold!"

IV.

And thus fall the loved, in the pride of their bloom —
  This rose is an emblem of beauty below —
The brightness of morn is extinguished in gloom;
  And the heart that was ardent is cold as the snow.

V.

I took up the remnants, the fragrance they gave
  Was sweet as the first breath exhaled at their birth;
So live the departed, when cold in the grave,
  In the loved recollection of virtue and worth.

THE OLD TIMES AND THE NEW.

(SUGGESTED BY THE LAYING OF THE ATLANTIC CABLE.)

A MINSTREL sat in his rustic seat,
  Crooning an ancient strain;
And the fragrant breath of the autumn wind
  Whispered a soft refrain.
As over the misty mountain side
  The shadows crept from their cave,
The minstrel felt that o'er his soul
  Came shadows from out the grave.

With negligent grace, a beautiful youth
  On the old man's knee reclined,
And a greyhound dozed on the velvet sward —
  A faithful companion and kind;
As the ancient sung, in his antique rhymes,
  The wonderful days of old —
Of turret and tower, and ladie fair,
  And knights in armor of gold.

And then, as he paused, the youth looked up,
  With a half-incredulous gaze,
"Yet more, my grandsire, tell me more
  Of those wonderful, dreamy days;
For I love the ring of thy simple string,
  And the gush of thy quaint old rhymes;
But methinks the bard who is yet unborn
  Will sing of more wonderful times:

"Since fire and smoke our battles contest,
And lightning flashes the news;
Our wagons are yoked to vapory steeds,
And a sunbeam paints our views;
While a sailless bark glides over the sea,
Nor waiteth for tide nor weather;
She spanneth the main with sensitive chain,
And weddeth two worlds together."

The minstrel looked in the boy's mild eye,
With a half-incredulous gaze,—
"Yet more, my son, you may tell me more
Of these wonderful, dreamy days;
My buried times to you are but dreams,
As your living times are to me!
Go, fetch thy shell, till I hear thee tell
This pleasant romance of the sea."

The youth then hied to the ancient hall,
And slipping his shell from his silken thrall,
That bound it many a day,
He hastened him back to the minstrel's chair,
When, lo, 't was void as the viewless air;
And castle and knight, and ladie fair,
Had faded forever away!

LINES TO SPRING.

I.

Spirit of Spring, by whose mysterious power
The lifeless clod resumes its emerald vest;
Whose fairy fingers form the incipient flower,
Who breathes vitality in Nature's breast, —
We hail thy presence in the northern clime;
Thy voice proclaims the power of Winter o'er, —
Thy voice — the music of a fairy chime —
That perfumed zephyrs waft from some enchanted shore!

II.

Oh, Spring! to me thou ever wert most dear,
Though luscious fruit nor golden grain are thine;
But Youth, the earnest of the coming year,
Sheds o'er thy beauteous face a ray divine;
And more than for thy beauty thee I prize,
(Since beauty fades like hues of parting day,)
Hope speaks me onward through thy beaming eyes
As in the rosy hours that time has stol'n away.

III.

When, through the vista of departed years,
Dim flit the shades of half-forgotten scenes,
When our young life felt not the weight of cares
That on the arm of burdened manhood leans;

What bygone joys so close to memory cling,
Or start so soon the tear of fond regret,
As those which filled our infant soul when Spring
Unveiled the slumb'ring moss, with sparkling dew-drops wet!

IV.

We thought — vain thought! - - we never more should know
The desolating storm, the cold, rude rain;
But Spring, like vestal fires, forever glow,
And vernal blooms eternally remain!
Fair days of sweet simplicity and love!
Bright days of innocence without alloy!
When our young souls seemed linked with souls above;
And the green world around a paradise of joy!

V.

E'en now, as some poor prisoner of despair,
Who day by day bemoaned his hapless fate,
Inhales with rapturous joy the ambient air,
When far behind he leaves his dungeon
So we, released from Winter's tyrant sway,
Bathe our glad bosoms in th' ethereal tide —
Bask in the warmth of Spring's rekindling ray —
And tune our amorous lyres to hail the coming bride!

VI.

Spirit of Spring! what mystic laws are thine!
What mind can penetrate thy wondrous art!
We can no more than offer on thy shrine
That bloodless sacrifice, a grateful heart.
What secret power calls forth the tender blade; —
Whence comes the life that animates the clod;
How flowers are dyed, perfumed; trees, rocks, arrayed!
Can mortal tongue declare? No tongue declare but God!

VII.

Then let my feet the dewy carpet press,
While orient Phœbus leads the hours along,
And oh, my soul, thy ardent joy express
In secret praise, if not in glowing song!
How sad their fate, who, languishing, are laid
Where fevers burn or ceaseless pains exhaust,
Where scarce a beam can pierce th' infected shade,
And Spring's ethereal balm and influences lost!

VIII.

Not such is mine! Great God, to thee I owe
The countless mercies of thy bounteous hand;
Sweet health, the sunshine of our bliss below,
These sibyl leaves wide-scattered o'er the land!
An eye that loveliness ne'er fails to please,
A mind to ponder, and a heart to pour
Its gushing love; — Almighty Father, these,
These are thy treasures free; and need I ask for more!

IX.

Flow, then, ye gurgling rills, — with me rejoice;
Blow softly, winds, and mingle in the strain;
Ye groves, be vocal with harmonious voice;
Roll thy deep solo, thou majestic main!
Join in, ye waterfalls, your wild notes raise;
Bleat out, ye wanderers of the flowery vale,
And let the glad hosannas of our praise
Ascend aloft to Heaven as incense on the gale!

May, 1852.

THE EAGLE-EYED.

I.

WHITHER hast thou lately wandered,
Child of eagle-eye,
Through the earth, or softly floated
'Mong the clouds on high?
Tell me where thy flight has been;
What thy searching sight has seen.

II.

Yes; the cloudland's topmost height
Oft restrained my lightning flight, —
Basking in th' etherial glow;
Watching earth that rolled below.
From my airy resting-place,
I beheld the human race
Tossed like weeds upon the ocean,
With a wild and mystic motion;
Dark clouds slowly heaping — heaping,
With a murmur as of weeping;
Banners streaming, war-steel gleaming, —
Much of mediæval dreaming,
In this fact-extolling age:
Heavenly Truth neglected, beaming
Dimly, as if men were deeming
But a myth th' inspired page!

O, thou arch-angelic form!
Riding o'er the gathering storm,
Thou must live, though all should fail —
"Truth is great, and will prevail!"

III.

Happy, happy creature, thou,
Gifted thus to see
All the multiforms of earth —
From its evils free!

IV.

False! dost thou suppose that I,
Who inhabit earth or sky,
Just as fancy bids me go,
Have not, too, my share of woe?
Freedom is not Pleasure's sire:
Are there limits to desire?
Is there ought we would not rule?
Go and ask Ambition's fool —
To his car a world in thrall —
Still he cries — "Too small, too small!"
'T is my mission to survey
Nature's mystery night and day;
And minutely to relate
Every change and every state —
Every bubble that may rise,
Every meteor as it flies,
Every rainbow as it glows,
Every zephyr as it blows,

Every tempest as it roars,
Every pinion as it soars, —
And if I should look serene
On this ever-varied scene,
Think not, thus serene and mild,
I am as a thoughtless child!
There 's a mirror in my breast,
Pictures true this wild unrest;
So yon cloud's complacent form
May be pregnant with a storm,
Yet it sails that azure sea
Like an angel-argosy!
Can I see, and seeing feel
Naught of human woe or weal?
Do I feel, and should I rave
At the Tyrant of the Grave?
Can we trace th' eternal WHY?
Gabriel knows 't were vain to try!
Will our surface-searching tell
All that doth in ocean dwell?
Or one hasty glance on high
Solve the problem of the sky?
What will all our searching do
If it teach us not to view
Every phase of earth and sky
With a hopeful, faithful eye?
Feeble creatures, space-ward hurled —
Tenants of an unknown world —
And upon this earth alone,
To ourselves the most unknown!

FLOWERS.

Plant your flowers, gentle Ida,
In the sunshine and the shade;
Nurse them as they burst and blossom,
Watch them as they droop and fade!
See how soon the tender seedling
Rises from the lifeless soil —
Hour by hour still growing fairer —
Without weariness or toil.

See them softly folding — folding,
Ere the coming steps of night;
See them opening in the morning
To the dew-drops and the light.
Then behold their wond'rous beauty —
Is there aught on earth more fair!
How they lend their heavenly perfume
Freely to the summer air!

Lovely flowers! let me find them
Wheresoever they may bloom; —
O'er the meadows — by the roadside —
In the valley — on the tomb.
Let them deck the dusty chamber,
Where the busy shuttle plies —
For they speak of waving branches,
Rippling streams and sunny skies!

Aye: they tell of flowers eternal,
  Blooming in the fields above, —
Binding heaven and earth together
  With a fragrant wreath of love.
Plant them, then, my pretty Ida,
  In the sunshine and the shade;
Nurse them as they burst and blossom;
  Watch them as they droop and fade.

THE LOST LOVE.

There was a bark without a helm, —
  Unguided o'er the wave;
No port was near, no light was there,
  No hand to guide or save,
                Alas!
  No hand to guide or save!

When, lo, there came an angel fair,
  And held the beacon bright;
But ere the lone ship reached the shore,
  She fled, and all was night
                Again;
  She fled, and all was night!

MOTHERLESS.

We missed her when the morning sun
  Its floods of beauty poured;
We missed her in the matin hymn,
  And round the family board.
And wand'ring 'mong the dewy flowers,
  Sweet voices filled the air,
But something seemed to murmur still
  Of one that was not there.

And when our little playmates came,
  They came not as of old, —
Their clouded brows and whispered words,
  The same sad story told.
And e'en the idle village group
  Respected our distress, —
And mirth grew silent on the lips
  That sighed — "The motherless!"

When, at the evening's peaceful close,
  We breathed the evening prayer,
Oh! how each aching bosom felt
  One voice awanting there!
One gentle voice, that ever fell
  Like soft angelic strains, —
Or mingling with our merriment,
  Or soothing in our pains.

We missed her when the autumn leaves
  Went rustling o'er the ground,
We missed her when the ice-king raved
  In storm and darkness round.
Nor have the rolling years effaced
  The wound thus early made, —
Full oft we feel the "aching void,"
  In sunshine or in shade.

THE LONE FLOWER.

FAR in a desert wide and bleak,
A lovely flow'ret sprung, —
Alone — for not a shrub was near,
And not a plant the sand did bear,
But this poor thing — as though 't were flung,
With tender stem and eye so meek,
An outcast from its kind, to seek
A lodgement anywhere.

"Thou lonely gem! so fair, so sweet, —
Ah! pity you should be
From man and flower so many a pace,
Where none your modest matchless grace,
And tints so exquisite may see.
Poor hermit-blossom! thee I greet,
As when, in foreign lands, we meet
A friend's familiar face!"

Methought the floweret's voice arose,
In accents mild and low:
"The Hand that formed the sand you tread,
That stretched the heavens above your head,
My single seedling here did sow, —
What heavenly wisdom doth dispose,
CONTENT no higher station knows,
So *here* I'll scent each gale that blows,
Till all my leaves are shed."

"COMING EVENTS."

CHILD of the faithless breast,
With the fool's tinsel dress'd,
  Loving to bask
In the soft pleasure-beam,
And without measure dream,
  Why dost thou ask:—

"Man of the thoughtful brow,
Where are the prophets now—
  Are they not dead?
Age-dust concealing them,
Time not revealing them,—
  Vain to be read!"

Mole of humanity,
Sin and profanity,
Words of insanity
  Thoughtlessly speaking!
Dim are those eyes of thine,
Black are those skies of thine;
  What art thou seeking?

Out from the earthly holes,
Filled with the bats and moles,—
  Sightless their eyes!
Lo, the prophetic Day!
Light, with a wonder-ray,
  Bright'neth the skies!

Not such a time, I ween,
Ever in earth was seen,
  As draweth near;
When a like mystery
In the world's history,
  As doth appear?

Hark to the ceaseless roll
Sounding from pole to pole, —
  Living waves flow!
Nations of every shade,
People of every grade,
  Run to and fro!

Each, with a knowledge-ray,
Turning the night to day, —
  Falsehood down-hurled!
Truth, with her trumpet-blast,
Gathering her legions vast,
  Over the world!

Canst thou the meaning read?
Dost thou the warning heed?
  — Time ever flies! —
See to those lamps of thine —
Empty, they faintly shine;
  'Wake and arise!

THE EXILED MINSTREL'S LEGACY.

When the poor Irish minstrel felt death drawing nigh,
His harp, long neglected, he seizes again;
And the wild gleam of boyhood rekindles his eye,
As the silver cords trill to the heart-melting strain.
He gazed on the billows that tossed their white spray,
While the cool ocean breezes his snowy locks fan;
He looked toward his island-home, far, far away;
Then swept a soft prelude, and thus he began:

"They tell me, O Erin, thy children are wailing,
Thy strength and thy beauty are sunk to decay,
Thy greatness and grandeur are hopelessly failing, —
As the towers of Dunbrody, they're crumbling away.
Like the eagle that fanned the blue depths of the sky,
And cleaved the white cloud with his sun-gilded crest,
When death dims the brightness that glanced from his eye,
And he beats the cold rock with his quivering breast!

"O Erin! my land, though long absent from thee,
When nightly I sink to uneasy repose,
I see thy fair meadows, sweet Gem of the Sea,
And press the soft banks where the Blackwater flows!
Aye, fresh in my slumber comes every loved scene
Where oft in free boyhood I wandered alone:
And the Vale of Avoca is mantling in green,
As it was in the bright days when care was unknown.

"I awake, — 't is a vision — forever are fled
  The rolling Blackwater and meadows so fair;
The leaves of Avoca are withered and dead,
  While gloomy Slieve Donnard re-echoes despair.
A light, wand'ring minstrel was I when a boy,
  And I knew every mountain and valley and stream;
My harp and my country completed my joy; —
  But all that remains to me now is a dream.

"But, again shalt thou flourish, my Emerald Isle,
  Though dim be thy skies and forsaken thy shore, —
Though drooping and helpless, 't is but for a while,
  To be fairer and stronger than ever before.
Like the seed that is scattered, it lives in the ground,
  Though the shackles of winter lie cold to its heart;
So thee, though the chains of oppression surround,
  Yet the soul of thy greatness shall never depart.

"May virtue, and peace, and contentment be thine;
  Let the olive-branch wave where the laurel twines now.
The weapons of strife for the sickle resign, —
  For the laurel encircles but tyranny's brow.
But what can a poor dying minstrel bestow,
  Save the song of his harp, which he cannot restrain?
If it teach but one bosom with ardor to glow,
  O Erin! his harp has not sounded in vain!"

CHANGED.

THE hills may rise, the rivers flow,
  Nor changed their beauty, place, or name, —
Each star retain its ancient glow, —
  But we are not the same.

You dream that Fate may yet restore
  Those youthful visions, warm and bright;
She may; but never, never more,
  That charm that gave delight!

Time may not yet have wrought decay,
  Nor grace nor loveliness estranged;
But ah! the *soul* has fled away,
  Since you and I are changed!

THERE'S A PATHWAY BEFORE US THROUGH LIFE.

I.

THERE'S a pathway before us through life, my love,
There's a pathway before us through life;
And though arbors of beauty and roses are there,
Yet many a bramble and many a tare,
We must find in this pathway of life, my love.

II.

And the sun will not always be bright, my love,
Nor the moon shed her tremulous light;
But many a shadow must darken our skies,
And many a cold, sullen tempest arise
In the pathway before us through life, my love.

III.

Young May will not always be ours, my love,
With her dew-sprinkled mantle of flowers;
Our trees must be stripped in the pitiless gale,
And the rude blast of winter must often prevail
In the pathway before us through life, my love!

IV.

But Heaven will ever be near, my love,
And we to each other be dear;
Then away with all sadness, nor ever repine; —
Thy love is my solace, and mine will be thine
For aye, in this pathway through life, my love.

HOPE IN THE FUTURE.

Why mourn for the things that forever are passed —
The blossoms and bubbles of Youth's sunny May?
Lo, the fairest of rainbows, how short does it last!
And the rainbows of life are as fleeting as they.
We may love to look back on the scenes of our childhood,
And dream o'er the visions that gave us delight,
To recall the old haunts of the lake and the wildwood,
The summer's mild morning and winter's long night;

But 't is vain to *regret* the bright days that are o'er;
For the pleasures of childhood 't is useless to pine;
Though the beauties of morning delight us no more,
Yet peace may be ours when the sun shall decline.
Then hope in the Future! though pleasure's faint gleam
May seem to be lost in a nightshade of sorrow,
Kind Heaven will kindle a holier beam —
And joy, with the sun, will arise on the morrow.

PLEASURE.

THERE journeyed a stranger o'er Araby's sand,
All weary and faint with the toils of the way,
Unconscious of water the cruise in his hand,
And void was his scrip ere the dawning of day.
He labored still onward, for dimly was seen
A rock in the distance; his heart was elate
With the hope of a fountain and pasturage green,
Where the cypress o'ershadowed the clustering date.

He came to the spot; but the rock was a mound,
The dates and the cypress were withered and sere;
And lo, when the hope-promised fountain was found,
He started, for naught but a viper was there!
So the mirage of pleasure we mortals pursue,
And labor the fountains of glory to gain;
But say, when we reach what so long is in view,
Do we more than the poor famished Arab attain?

THE BELLE OF THE BALL ROOM.

I.

Why cometh the shadow of night?
  Why heaveth the sigh of the sad,
Where lamps pour a noon-day of light,
  And young hearts are bounding and glad?
Hath music no charms for thy heart?
  Have Beauty and Pleasure no spells?
Cheer up! and let dulness depart
  To the cave where Misanthropy dwells.
The visits of pleasure are brief,
  And life is swift passing away —
To-morrow may bring you its grief;
  But to-night you are called to be gay!

II.

Though Beauty around me doth shine,
  Though the sweetest of melodies rise,
Yet all that I witness combine
  To sadden each moment that flies!
Ah, seest thou yon maiden whose face
  May the envy of Venus excite —
Whose blushes successively chase,
  Like Aurora the heavens by night?

Her beauty, aurora-like, toc,
  Now brightneth the circles around;
But just as we're charmed with the view,
  It is gone! and no more may be found.
A few years of gladness and woe —
  A season of sunshine and shade —
And these exquisite touches, we know,
  Must — alas! must eternally fade!
O Heaven! why loveliness give
  To beings whose life is a day —
Who are scarcely beginning to live,
  When, lo, they begin to decay!
This daffodil thing of an hour —
  Though modest and mild as the dove —
Yet sways what a world-moving power.
  In the passion — the madness of love!
As frail as the sensitive bud.
  That to touch it will cease to exist;
As strong as Niagara's flood,
  That adamant cannot resist!
Fair maiden! thy moments are gold!
  What livest thou, then, to display?
A sunbeam! and what wilt thou hold
  When that halo hath melted away?

DAY-DREAMS.

LIFE were but a weary burden
  If without its dreams;
These are of the curtained Future
  First faint gleams!

When the spirit — chained and chambered
  In her house of clay —
Catches through the dungeon window
  Morn's glad ray.

Like a messenger from Heaven
  Singing at your prison gate,
"Weep not, captive — earth still smileth;
  Pray — hope — wait!

"Though all beauty is excluded,
  I am come to thee,
Whispering — What thy warm heart loveth,
  Thou shalt see!"

A VESPER FRAGMENT.

(ON VISITING "LADY POND," A BEAUTIFUL LAKE NEAR HARBOUR GRACE, NEWFOUNDLAND.)

Hark, how the echoes wake,
And every footfall hath a twin-born sound,
As o'er the shingled margin of this lake
We pass! What rural beauty spreads around!
The mossy bank — the rocks — the birchen mound —
Th' empurpled sky reflected in the wave;
And stretching onward, in the distance bound
By pine-clad hills, where Echo hath her cave.
Behold, what joyous sight to all but Mammon's slave!

How oft hath Winter's adamantine hand
Hushed the soft murmurs of thy rippling breast;
How oft hath Summer, with her genial wand,
Again with liberty and beauty blessed!
The forest prides that erst the mountain dressed
Have left no remnant of their former reign;
The hills have varied with their changing vest,
(For time and tempest labor not in vain,)
But thou through every change unaltered dost remain!

This is no classic ground — if such we name
Where ancient deeds of chivalry were done,
Writ in the annals of immortal fame —
If such be classic ground, then this is none;
But stay; perchance e'en here were laurels won,
And valiant deeds that waked no living lyre —
Kings may have here their race of glory run,
And heroes kindled war's consuming fire —
Perchance these hills beheld their cradle and their pyre!

Full oft on yonder rocky point has stood,
Long ere these waving pines first saw the day,
Nature's own son, sole lord of lake and wood, —
The dusky chieftain, — while beneath him lay
The rippling wavelet, kissing the last ray
Of the declining sun. But thou art past,
Thou swarthy monarch! thou art swept away,
As autumn's leaf before the northern blast —
Forgotten as a stone in depths of ocean cast!

And thus we fade; not these alone, but all,
Like to the ray that on yon craggy rocks
So lately shone, but vanished now! How small
Our tenure! Lo, at every door he knocks —
The tyrant Death, — and time's repeated shocks
Destroy e'en empires' walls! These trodden leaves
Are last year's growth, which now the present mocks;
Ere we are born our winding-sheet time weaves;
Our birth delights to-day; our death to-morrow grieves!

FAREWELL TO TERRA NOVA.

IMPROMPTU.

Dear Land of my Birth! ere the mists of the deep
Conceal thy wild cliffs from my lingering view —
(Though willing to leave thee, yet, leaving, I weep,) —
Let a prayer for thy weal be my solemn adieu.

I leave thee; but yet not alone do I leave
The home of my childhood, the haunts of my youth;—
But the souls and the scenes that first taught me to weave
The iris-hued mantle of beauty and truth.

Oh, yes; they may scorn thy bleak face if they may,
Who feel not the life-blood that throbs at the core;
Nor thy gush of true friendship, as bright as the day,
And as free as the billow that breaks on thy shore!

What stranger ere sought thee, that sought thee unblessed?
What child ever left thee without a regret?
And who that hath clung to thy generous breast
Could bid thee forever farewell — and forget?

What memories thicken, as dimly recede
  Those ramparts that smile at the tempest and billow!
The lake and the mountain — the barrens — the mead —
  The cave in the cliff, and the pond 'neath the willow —

The plain by the sea-side — the walk by the wall —
  The shady old wood where so often I roved;
But fresher the mem'ries, and dearer than all,
  Of the hearth-stones encircled by friends that I loved!

Farewell! Thou art gone! not a vestige in sight!
  Farewell! — all my soul is poured out in the word.
Naught is seen but the chill, misty curtain of night;
  And naught but the voice of Old Ocean is heard.

GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE.

MEMORIES.

THERE is a fair lake in a far-off isle, —
Among the piney ridges — by whose marge
My boyhood loved to wander and beguile
The sunny hours. I launched my tiny barge
Upon its rippling breast, and watched it glide
Before the breeze — sometimes o'erborne and tossed
With ruder wavelets, soon again to ride
Triumphant; so 't would float till in the distance lost.

Lost and forgotten, till some other morn
Would lead my footsteps to that flowery strand;
When lo, my little bark! its sails all torn —
A mimic wreck, half-buried in the sand.
How would I grasp it, kiss it, call it "pet!"
And careful wash the gathered weeds and slime
From off its painted side!
Oh yet, fond Memory, yet,
Thou lov'st to find these wrecks along the shores of Time.

TO TERRA NOVA.

Cœlum, non animum mutant.

HORACE.

ONCE more I weave a song for thee,
My own, my native land!
And show that change doth not estrange
The heart that prompts the hand —
Though many a day hath passed away
Since I forsook thy strand.

Full oft doth faithful Mem'ry bring
The friends I loved of old;
Warm hands are clasped I used to clasp,
And oft-told tales re-told;
And youthful loves, with dreamy joy,
My fancy's arms enfold!

Oh, for an hour once more to greet
Each well-remembered scene!
To breathe the air I used to breathe,
And be what I have been;
The sky, but not the heart, hath changed,
Though ocean rolls between!

My childhood days — my school-boy days —
  My youthful days are o'er;
And many an eye that beamed on me
  Shall beam on me no more, —
For one by one they closed! — and yet —
  "Not lost; but gone before."

But let me brush this tear away;
  'T were folly to regret.
Thy cliffs are still the same; the waves
  Dash o'er thy rocks of jet;
And many an old familiar form
  Would be familiar yet!

Once more, before the Reaper come,
  I hope to press thy strand,
Who can forget, whate'er betide,
  His own — his Native Land?
Then trust me — Change doth not estrange
  The heart that prompts the hand!

ONE WORD MORE.

Oh, 't is so hard to part!
How soon the time has fled!
But though we whisper daylight in,
Much is left unsaid.
Why, yes; I know 't is late;
We 're standing by the door;
But ere we say "Good night," my love,
There 's one word more!

Let me think; alas, 't is gone!
No matter — it 's too late.
And yet I had a word to say,
Were it well to wait.
Good night, then, love, good night!
I 'll softly close the door;
Yet stay — one little moment, stay —
There 's one word more!

I COULD NOT SAY "GOOD NIGHT."

I.

I TURNED to say "Good Night;
'T was smothered in a sigh,
For a shade was on thy brow,
And a sadness in thine eye.
But when the portal closed
That hid thee from my sight,
I felt as one condemned,
For I did not say "Good Night!"

II.

I stood and sighed, and strove
To calm my beating heart;
I knew it was not thus
That you and I should part!
'T is hard to say "Adieu!"
When souls are free and light;
But oh, when wrapped in shade,
How can we say "Good Night!"

III.

I longed, I yearned to know
  Thy secret pain; to pour
Love's balm upon the wound,
  And thy sunny smile restore;
Since that sweet beam of love
  Is all my soul's delight,
Without it — we may part —
  But *I* could not say "Good Night!"

IV.

Perhaps I was deceived
  By Fancy's idle play!
Ah, yes; I see thee smile,
  And seem to hear thee say, —
"My brother, cease thy fears;
  The sun of love is bright;
A passing cloud may shroud,
  But cannot quench its light."
Oh, then, my love — my life!
  I'll pray, and say "Good Night!"

THE REPLY.

I.

I LISTENED for "Good Night!"
  Thy voice gave no reply;
Thy pale lips were compressed,
  And averted was thine eye.
The door I sadly closed —
  You faded from my sight —
My *spirit* waited still
  The whispered words, "Good Night!"

II.

I loved you none the less
  For the shadow on my heart;
I felt you knew it not,
  Or thus we could not part.
Oft am I weary-hearted,
  But you will still forbear;
One spot no shadow darkens,
  'T is sunlight ever there.

"KILLED AND WOUNDED."

I.

KILLED and wounded — wounded and killed!
A marshal, a colonel, a captain falls
'Mid clash of swords and whistle of balls,
And a nation mourns the blood that is spilled.
The proud mausoleum lifts its head
On the place where the gore of the great is shed;
Cypress waves its classical bough,
And laurels wreathe the marble brow.

II.

Killed and wounded — wounded and killed!
A youth with an ardent soul is dead,
The blood of a brave unknown is shed,
And who 's to heed the heart that is chilled?
No monument marks the place of his rest;
But the turf that covers his wounded breast
Bears one little blossom, whose sickly bloom
Drearily marks the nameless tomb.

III.

Killed and wounded — for glory and fame!
And a friendless female, weak and wan,
Tremblingly asks the news-bearing man
If Death's grim roll shows "William's" name.

With careless eye, the name he seeks —
"He 's dead." — "My God!" she wildly shrieks;
And laughing hysteric they bear her away
To feed on her grief from day to day!

IV.

And alone — alone in her widow's weeds,
She talks of her dead one day and night;
She sees him fall in the thick of the fight —
And a terrible gash in his bosom bleeds!
At last her brain begins to swim,
Her soul grows dark, her memory dim,
And ever by bleeding forms surrounded,
She 's vacantly mutt'ring, "Killed and wounded!"

V.

The sweet little cot in the shade of the trees,
With roses and jessamines twining above,
Where William and she did live and love,
And welcome their guests, the birds and the breeze —
Is lonely now; the leaves are shed,
The flowers are withered, the birds have fled;
The zephyrs come as they did of yore,
Only to sigh at the moss-barred door.
But often at night, when all is stilled,
A voice is murmuring, "Wounded and killed."

THE SONG OF PEACE.

"PEACE! peace! peace!"
O God! are the tidings true?
Or is it a dream that gives increase
To misery's deep'ning hue!
And yet — but hark! again and again —
The boom of the signal gun;
And a mingled shout, like a distant main,
Goes up with the morning sun.

The breezes whisper of love,
And the clouds like virgins lave
In the golden flood, as the white-winged dove
Comes breasting it over the wave.
'T is seen — 't is seen, that messenger fair,
From city, and castle, and plain —
And hearts leap up; while grim Despair
Unrivets his icy chain.

To haunts of lonely woe —
To pillows bedewed with tears —
Speed on and bid the chilled hearts glow,
And the timid forget their fears;

Go tell them the battle is o'er,
  And give to the watch-worn rest;
To the lone ones speak, that they sigh no more
  In young love's rifled nest.

  Rejoice, ye hearts that prize
Not victory's perishing crown,
  But that which drew from the bending skies
A pitying Godhead down.
Peace! peace! peace!
  Sweet words, by angels sung!
Then speed with the message of joy — nor cease
  Till echoed by every tongue.

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

I.

O'ER SALEM'S consecrated land,
Night, with a soft, indulgent hand,
  Spread her bespangled pall;
Throughout the vale no sound was heard, —
Naught but the ever-tuneful bird,
  And distant waterfall.

II.

While on the mountain's mossy side
His prostrate flocks the shepherd eyed,
  And oft the starry zone;
For he, while all the rest around
In slumber's silken folds were bound,
  Was wakefulness alone.

III.

Familiar to his watchful eye
Each twinkling world that rolled on high,
  And thronged unbounded space:
He knew their time, their orb, their name;
Each separate world, each varied flame;
  And could their systems trace.

IV.

'T was in the loneliest hour of night,
A wand'ring star divinely bright,
  Unknown to him, he saw!
With mute perplexity he gazed,
For still it moved and brighter blazed —
  Unruled by stellar law!

V.

And others saw the stranger star,
And wond'ring, gathered from afar,
  With looks of terror pale!
When lo, a sudden brilliance shone,
As if the star a sun had grown,
  And filled the spacious vale!

VI.

All prostrate on the dewy ground,
The helpless shepherds fell around —
  O'erawed by terror sore;
While heavenly minstrelsy was heard,
And lo, the Angel of the Lord
  These joyful tidings bore:

VII.

"Glory to God on high be given,
The Sov'reign Lord of earth and heaven!
  Glad tidings do we bring:
Peace — good-will to men on earth;
In David's House, a glorious birth —
  Your Saviour and your King!"

VIII.

Then heavenward winged that being fair,
While countless myriads filled the air,
  Singing new songs through space! —
New hymns of love! And as the ew,
Old things had passed and all was new —
  New Law, new Priest, new Grace!

IX.

Loud did the stars their anthem raise!
Till all the universe was praise,
  And glorious unity!
Seraphic hosts take up the song,
And Heaven's high courts the strains prolong
  Throughout infinity!

X.

And then the shepherd-sages knew
'T was Bethlehem's Star — divinely true —
  By ancient seers foretold!
Then flocked they to the lowly shrine
T' adore the Prince of Judah's line,
  Laden with gifts and gold.

XI.

And there devoutly they beheld
Him, who the universe upheld
  And ruled with sov'reign sway —
Who was, and is, and is to be —
The Power that fills Immensity —
  The Godhead clothed in clay!

THE SAILOR-BOY AND THE BIRD OF PASSAGE.

Fly, little wanderer,
  Fly to my breast;
Why hast thou winged so far,
  Heedless of rest?
Why didst thou leave the land,—
  Joyous and bright,—
Tempting the ruthless wave,
Ever a yawning grave,
  Gloomy as night?
'T is in the sunny vale
  Where thou shouldst be,
Trilling thy song of love;
  Not on the sea.
Come, little wanderer,
  Come to my breast;
Thou shalt return to thy
  Leaf-covered nest!

Thrice did the wanderer
  Wheel round the mast;
Wheeling, her song was heard,
Like a celestial bird,
  Sweet, in the blast:

"Though I have flown so far,
(This was her song,)
Tempting the ruthless wave,
Still am I strong;
For there is One above,
Who, in his tender love,
Careth for me;
And, with unwearied hand,
Guides me from land to land,
Safe o'er the sea."

SONNET.

Last eve we wandered where the moonbeam lay
Serenely on the deep — a mirror fair,
Extending far and wide, — reflecting clear
The varied beauties of the dying day. —
Sweet scene; but sweeter still to view
In thy fond eyes, affection deep and true, —
Pure, fervent, heavenly, beautiful and calm!
And oh, love, as I gazed, your lips such balm
Dropped on my soul, that every trace of care
Was wiped away, and naught was potent there
But joy supreme, complete — joy in thy joy,
Life in thy love — that time cannot destroy,
But must increase, as heavenward still we glide,
Urged by each favoring breeze and swelling tide.

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

What is Life but expectation!
Dreaming ever something near, —
Ending all in sore vexation, —
Thorny chaplets, gilded air!
Thus we live on fancied pleasures,
Fancied honors, fancied treasures,
Still to hope and dream again,
Though to dream and hope in vain!

Thoughtless childhood hails the light,
Not with heaven-adoring joy,
But with dreams that mid-day bright
Will reveal the wished-for toy.
Noon is passed; they sigh and say, —
"Eve will bring it — come away!"
Still to hope and dream again,
Though to dream and hope in vain!

Evening cometh — stars are beaming —
Vespers soothe each sainted breast;
But the graybeards now are dreaming;
For the prize is unpossessed!
Whispering, with a pang of sorrow, —
"Let us sleep — 't will come to-morrow."
But the morrow comes in vain, —
Since they ne'er may dream again!

EXTRACTS

FROM A POEM READ BEFORE THE BOSTON YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, SEPTEMBER, 1857.

I. Spiritualism.

'T is strange our friends, who, when alive, were famous
  For common sense, in churches, senates, schools, —
Should, when deceased, come back unseen and shame us
  With tricks of monkeys, fast young men, and fools!
Nor can we deem it merely myths or fables,
Since lo, they run away with chairs and tables!
Or ask a medium out to dine, and soon
You'll find him spirit off each silver spoon.
The shade, perhaps, of some old grave divine —
  Say, Increase Mather — come invisible,
And visibly decrease your case of wine,
  Or hook the marriage ring of Isabel!
'T is wonderful! 't is wonderful! their might;
But still we dare not question they are right.
And if they should be wrong, why, only think,
They're fishing, like ourselves, for meat and drink!

II. Our Age.

This is the age of progress and of mind,
And surely he is lost who lags behind;
Time used to fly, but now he scarcely creeps,
And space is compassed with our lightning-leaps!
From hill to hill goes up one ceaseless cry:
"Excelsior! excelsior! or die!"
Ambition fills the universal breast,
And moves the ocean with a wild unrest.
The mighty current sweeps with ceaseless roar;
Our waves of fortune dash on every shore.
Where blows the breeze that doth not waft a sail?
Where is the waste untrod, or secret vale?
Where is the country Commerce does not own?
The rock uncharted, or the isle unknown?
We span the wide, wide world, from pole to pole,
And, if not Freedom, Knowledge claims the whole!
"More and yet more," unsated Science cries,
And plumes her eagle pinions for the skies.
And yet, 't is sad, that vanity of power
Should rule these hearts, poor creatures of an hour;
And not content with palpables in view,
We grasp at filmy shades and vapors, too!
What can the loftiest intellect attain?
"A few poor shells from out the mighty main,
While Truth, eternal, rolls on every side, —
Boundless, sublime, unfathomed and untried!"

III. Friendship.

Ah! Friendship, it is said, is but a name,
And human hearts feel not the glowing flame!
While every virtue is a welcome guest,
That she may find no hospitable breast;
But like some weary pilgrim doomed to roam,
Unknown abroad and unbeloved at home, —
Knock at each door and crave some safe retreat,
But with'ring scowls and chill rebuffs to meet!
Ah no! a kindlier doctrine bids me own
That human hearts are not all hearts of stone;
That Adam's sons retain some nobler trace
Of Adam's self beside the form and face; —
Enough of goodness with the bad combine
To show the human wreck was once divine!
As splend'd fragments scattered o'er the sea,
Betray the wreck of some rich argosy;
As Attic ruins, through age-dust dimly seen,
Reveal how vast her glory must have been.

IV. Love and Learning.

We love to see the face of beauty here, —
"None but the brave," we know, "deserve the fair."
But pray, dear ladies, when you come, be sure
To let young Cupid stand outside the door;
For should he come, with bow and arrows too,
Why, then, to learning we may bid adieu; —
Since it is so — you 'll own it, p'rhaps with loathing —
That lovers are but fools in wise men's clothing!

THE SAILOR'S SONG TO THE MOON.

Fair moon, dear moon,
  Thou lightest a vale
Beyond this watery zone,
  And one sweet angel is walking there,
And weeping and sighing alone;
And, p'rhaps, sometimes she looks at thee,
  As she weeps and sighs alone.

Oh that thou wert but a mirror clear,
  Instead of a great, round stone!
Then often as I should gaze at thee
  I 'd see that maiden alone,
Away — away in the distant vale,
  As she weeps and sighs alone.

ONE SONG FOR THEE BEFORE I REST.

One song for thee before I rest,
  One prayer for thee before I sleep, --
May slumber bring thee visions blest,
  And angels round thee vigils keep!

My love, my last thoughts are of thee,
  My first with day's first, rosy beams;
Nor doth the night deny the light
  Of thy sweet eyes in all my dreams!

One lonely star from out the deep,
  With gentle ray, doth on me shine;
I bless kind Heaven by whom 't is given —
  For, lovely one, that star is thine!

This song for thee before I rest,
  This prayer for thee before I sleep, —
While Slumber folds thee to her breast,
  May angels ceaseless vigils keep!

THE DROWNED BOY.

'T is gone! the spark of life is quenched,
  The little heart has ceased its rapid beating, —
The cheek is cold — the golden locks all drenched;
  And the young soul is gone to heavenly greeting!

See, yonder is his little boat,
  Awaiting but this hand to guide its motion, —
Nay, little argosy, 't is thine to float
  Alone, unguided, to the boundless ocean!

Ah, scarce an hour ago, these eyes,
  So fixed and leaden, danced with life and gladness,—
Like ever mild and beaming summer skies,
  That ne'er grew sullen with a cloud of sadness!

These lips, that but a brief hour past
  Lay on a mother's cheek like bursting roses,
Are now as lilies crushed by sudden blast —
  In whose soft folds still loveliness reposes.

His mother! Who shall bear the tale,
  That this her tender bud she loved and cherished —
Her single sunbeam in life's tearful vale —
  Her hope — her only joy — her boy — has perished!

THE FIRST SNOW-FLAKE.

A FRAGMENT.

* * * * * * *

SOFT as the plumage of an angel's wing,
And silent all, save when the moaning winds,
In hollow gusts, autumnal requiems sing —
Scatt'ring the faded wreath that Nature's forehead binds!

Fall fast, ye snows, and hide what may remain
Of Summer, which thou warnest me is past;
Rude Winter comes, the year is on the wane,
Its fruits are garnered and its leaves are cast.

* * * * * * *

Tempestuous Winter comes, and who can tell
What message he may bear? what joy or woe?
What gracious boons or dire disasters swell
The burden of his breast? We little know —
We little can divine the issue of his frowns!
Time may alone dispel the mystic cloud
That veils our destinies, and e'en surrounds
The living moment with impenetrable shroud!

Come, winds! these withered remnants sweep away —
These sere and sad mementoes of the past —
Come bear them from my sight, — for what do they
But mock the wistful gaze? Then let thy blast
Be an oblivion-besom to their race —
A Lethe to our woes, since none can see
With else than pain, Death's pallid face;
What erst was life and love is now cold vacancy!

HARVARD.

I LOVE thy seats of Learning, still and hoary, —
To loiter o'er this lawn — beneath these trees, —
Where voices seem to whisper in the breeze,
Of men whose actions are a nation's story, —
A proud, young nation, — noble, great and free!
O Harvard, may thy halls forever be
The shrines wherein Heaven's trust to thee consigned —
The Pilgrim-ark of Truth and Liberty —
Shall be thy sole Palladium of Mind,
Where injured Right may stanch defenders find!
The germs of thought, from which all actions rise,
Will long survive the hands that freely cast;
Then may the seed still sown beneath these skies
Bring forth each harvest worthier than the last!

GONE!

HARK! the midnight bell is tolling
In the silence and the gloom —
Tolling, like the knell of doom —
Gone — gone — gone!
While the north winds, moaning, sighing,
Through the brown leaves, seem to mock it;
While the midnight torch is dying —
Rising, sinking in the socket:
Gone — gone — gone!

"Dust to dust, and earth to earth:"
Times of friendship, times of mirth,
Times of silent, lonely sorrow —
Hoping — yearning for the morrow.
With the secret, sunny glances;
With the changes and the chances!
Gone, with all those gorgeous towers,
Piling high the clouds above;
Gone, with all those shady bowers
Dedicate to youth and love!
Gone, with all those great ambitions
Kindled in the ardent breast;

With those dear, old home-traditions,
  And those songs that lulled to rest!
Gone, with all our way-side wand'rings,
  And those whisperings 'neath the briar;
With the sweet and pensive pond'rings,
  Sitting by the evening fire.
And the bell has ceased its tolling; —
  One more day of life is reckoned;
But the current still is rolling
  With this murmur every second, —
    Gone — gone — gone!

"IL PENSEROSO."

A BACHELOR'S AUTUMN REVERIE.

My heart is sad! who cares to know?
  Then let me tell it to the wind.
Men share our joy, but not our woe,
  And ease the coffer — not the mind!

And yet, *why* sad, I cannot tell, —
  I'm not deceived — I've nothing lost;
What came, I knew would come, full well, —
  And ken'd, of every slip, the cost.

The dead leaves mingle with the clay,
  Or rustle in the biting gale,—
Their purpose wrought, they pass away;
  But what can rueful sighs avail?

The spring buds blossomed fresh and fair,
  And summer flowers bedecked the plain:
Why mourn that autumn leaves are sere?
  'T was ever thus! They'll come again!

They'll come again? Ah, no! not these;—
  They're gone for aye, like life's young hours!
And other springs must clothe the trees,
  And other suns bring other flowers.

Oh, had I loved as I should love,
  And lived as I should live, alway,—
My soul, upsoaring like a dove,
  Would scorn thy poison-breath, Decay!

THE PRINTER.

How little ye ken,
Ye women and men, —
By courtesy styled "gentle readers," —
Of how much you owe
To the noble Typo
And his army of folders and feeders!

The poet may sing
Of his lyrical string —
Of his Muses, his Loves, and his Graces;
But ah! he'd sing small,
If he warbled at all,
Were it not for the chases and cases!

The writer of fiction,
Whose beautiful diction
Beguiles the long evenings of winter, —
His mind would be left
Like a casket bereft
Of its key — if not picked by the printer!

The annalist, too,
That brings to your view
The wonderful story of ages,
Would, sure, be as dumb
As a clam or a mum-
my, if nobody made up his pages!

Then whoso doth read,
I beg him take heed
To the lesson these stanzas convey him, —
Viz: — Now that you know
What a treasure you owe
To the Printer, be certain — to pay him!

FAUST.

A LAMENT FOR LOST YOUTH.

Oh, for my sunny youth again!
The bounding current and the glowing flame;
The wild, free will, that naught of earth could tame—
The supple limb—the teeming brain;
My youth—my sunny youth again!

Oh, ye delusions—airy-built!
Ye fires that lured me from the beaten way!
Fiends, phantoms!—see!—these locks are gr y!
The ruby wine of life is spilt!
The sword is rusted to the hilt!

Cold is this bosom now! Forlorn
This icy heart, that erst could meet and melt
With Beauty's glance!—the airy hall, where dwelt,
In early life's empurpl'd morn,
Thoughts—purposes, sublime, heaven-born!

What is it now? Approach and ope!—
Look in! A charnel-house, all dim and damp,
Where shrouded things do grin around the lamp
Of an expiring, hopeless Hope,
And loathsome creatures flit and grope!

Oh, for my sunny youth again!
The bounding current and the glowing flame —
The wild, free will that naught of earth could tame —
The supple limb — the teeming brain!
My youth — my sunny youth again!

This heart's thin tide once leap'd and gush'd
With a most heavenly fervor! Fingers dear
Once wanton'd in the curls that cluster'd here;
And Love, this pallid cheek once flush'd!
Long — long ago those flowers were crush'd!

These stony eyes once drank the beams
Of eyes as radiant as a child of light;
And we did love the fields, the woods, the night,
The mossy banks of nameless streams, —
And all that brought us blissful dreams!

Such dreams as haunt the souls, alone,
Of Youth and Beauty — when young Hope bestows
Her amaranthine wreaths, and manhood glows
With gifts that almost seem their own, —
To older, colder hearts unknown!

Oh, for that sunny time again!
The bounding current and the glowing flame —
The wild, free will, that naught of earth could tame, —
The supple limb — the teeming brain!
My youth — my sunny youth again!

Of this world's wealth I naught possess'd;
Nor could I seek it where the vulgar seek!
I tortur'd Nature's self, that she might break
To me the secret of her breast —
That seem'd for ever half-express'd!

Day brought no fruit, and night no sleep;
And year chased year, like bubbles on a brook;
And sometimes I would curse, and dash the book
Upon my cell's dank floor — and weep, —
"Is this the harvest I must reap?"

I knew my life was waning fast;
I felt my pulse beat feebler, day by day;
My limbs grew rigid and my locks grew grey, —
And night-winds murmured — "Youth is pass'd,
The game is o'er — the die is cast!"

What! pass'd? And where, my love, art thou,
Whose last warm kiss still lingers on my cheek?
What say'st thou, fiend? That I my love must seek
Where the pale lilies cluster, now,
And death-flowers coronal her brow!

Oh, for my sunny youth again!
The bounding current and the glowing flame,
The wild, free will, that naught of earth could tame;
The supple limb — the teeming brain;
Oh, for my sunny youth again!

WILLIE'S GRAVE.

(AN AUTUMNAL SKETCH AT MOUNT AUBURN CEMETERY.)

A GENTLE maiden, young and lovely,
  Stands in mute and mystic gloom,
While the sinking sun, her shadow
  Casts upon a little tomb.
Everywhere the storied marble
  Tells where mould'ring greatness lie,
But this little tomb and maiden
  Most attract the stranger's eye.

"Wherefore — wherefore, sylph-like creature —
  With a gloom beyond thy days,
Dost thou, through the pearly shower,
  On that simple tablet gaze?
Time enough for thee to weep yet
  O'er the ills of human-kind;
Soon, too soon, thou'lt feel life's burdens,
  Soon, too soon, its sorrows find."

But without one answering sentence,
  Still she droops her radiant head;
Tranquil all is, save the sere leaves
  Autumn sprinkles o'er the dead;—
One by one these deathly emblems,
  Quivering, rustling o'er the ground,
Seem as though each shrouded tenant
  Of the tombs were gliding round;
While the golden flood of evening
  Bathes each marble, tree and mound.

Gently tread — the ground is holy!
  See whose dust she weepeth o'er;
Lo, the simple superscription, —
  "Little Willie" — nothing more.
That 's enough! These pregnant letters
  Speak a volume to the heart,
Full of more pathetic meaning
  Than the labored lines of art.

Love divine! mysterious heaven-light,
  Glimmering e'en through earthly glooms,
Why take up thy fickle dwelling
  In this world of tears and tombs?
Spring brings forth the beauteous blossom,
  Summer breathes her ripening breath,
But — when harvest should be gathered,
  Lo, we find decay and death!

Maiden, let this good old lesson
  Ever in thy memory live, —
"Earth's best promises are bubbles,
  Glittering only to deceive."
Look beyond the pearly portals,
  Far in yon ethereal deep,
For the Graces without fading,
  And the Loves that never sleep.

THE STARS.

Come forth, ye orbs of light!
I bless your gentle rays
For the sweet memories they bring
Of other days.

Ah, ye are still the same —
Bright, beautiful and mild;
As full of joy to me as when
I was a child!

Earth's flow'rets droop and die;
Life 's but a fickle flame;
All — all we love decay, — but ye
Are still the same!

I bless ye for the true
Companionship I find
In the fond picturings of the past
Ye call to mind: —

Once more each well-known scene —
Each valley, wood, and stream,
And every haunt my childhood loved,
Comes like a dream!

Ye stars! how oft have we,
Beneath the wing of night,
Paused in our merry games to watch
Your welcome light!

Our childish lore displayed
In speculations deep —
We deemed ye were the glittering tears
That angels weep!

For, on each flower, next morn,
Did not the pearl-drop stand,
That fell in noiseless showers by night
O'er all the land?

Ah, sad that time should bear
Such pretty dreams from view!
But, sadder still, that he should take
The dreamers too.

And yet 'tis sweet to muse
On joys and sorrows o'er, —
And throng with images of love
That distant shore!

To speak with them, and hear
The old familiar names,
And see the eyes that blessed us once
In those far flames.

O Memory! balm of Heaven!
So faithful is thy keeping,
Thou seemst to whisper to each soul,
"Not dead, but sleeping!"

While Hope, with finger raised
To shining realms above,
Bids dark Despondency give place
To trusting Love!

FRIENDLESS.

He said he had no friend! He was alone, —
A waif — a fallen leaf — a wand'ring star;
At home a stranger, and abroad unknown;
Dwelling with men, and yet from men afar!

Day after day he mingled with the crowd,
Men marked him not, nor shared with him his woe;
Though fair, though young, by cares untimely bowed;
And life's chilled current scarcely seemed to flow.

Faint smiles would sometimes light his pale, cold cheek,
As moonbeams trembling on a lonely tomb, —
More sad than tears, they only served to speak
Of crumbling hopes within, and rayless gloom!

Day after day he wandered, mute and sad, —
Friend greeting friend, and love's warm welcome heard;
But not for him, — since friend he never had
To cheer him with one kind, consoling word.

No father runs to fold him to his breast;
  His griefs no mother's sympathies allay;
He came — nor household joy his advent blessed,
  Nor any mourned him when he passed away.

What! couldst thou find in all this world, fair youth,
  No flame congenial with thine own to burn?
No eye to pity, and no tongue to soothe?
  No hand to wreathe thy solitary urn?

And what he might have been, — ah, who can tell?
  What task for him his Maker had designed, —
What light neglect's cold shadows did dispel, —
  What heaven-born genius slumbered in his mind!

Is this a fable? Nay, but look around,
  Ye prudent ones, who boast the genial glow,
And blush to think, — where Friendship's fane is found,
  A sordid pedestal is seen below.

THE STRANGE OLD BARK.

When the tide was low, and the evening mist
  Crept down over cliff and cave,
And the sea-breeze moaned a dirge-like song
  To the mournful beat of the wave,
Arose like a spectre, silent and dark,
The mouldering ribs of a strange old bark,
  As if from an ocean grave.

'T was a ghastly sight in the dim twilight, —
  As the waves came gurgling near,
With sea-weed strung from each rusted bolt,
  Like scalps on a chieftain's spear;
And brave was the lad, when day was o'er,
Who passed alone by that haunted shore,
  Unchill'd by a nameless fear.

How it stole the glow from my boyish cheek,
  When the night was wild and dark,
To sit by the pilot's knee and hear
  Him tell of the strange old bark!
And years have passed, but oft to my mind,
With the hollow moan of the winter wind,
  Come thoughts of the strange old bark.

THE EVE OF THE GOLDEN WEDDING.

"Oh, sing me the songs you used to sing
When Love was in its May!
And tell me the tales you used to tell,
As we wandered down by the willow well,
At the close of the summer-day!

"The songs that spoke of a gushing hope,
And a strong, large heart and true;
Those sly little tales of love and life —
Where *I* was ever the 'fair young wife,'
And the 'happy bridegroom' — *you!*

"When your eye was bright, and your cheek was smooth,
And your step was firm and free;
And your locks — so scant and snowy now —
In clusters brown fell over your brow,
That ever was a joy to me.

"To-morrow, dear, 's our wedding-day;
And 't is fifty years, to-night,
You op'd a little box, with trembling care,
And the moonbeam showed me a something there
Like a fairy circlet of light!

"Now sing me the song you sang that time,
When Love was in its May;
And tell me the tale you then did tell,
As we loitered down by the willow well,
At the close of that summer day!"

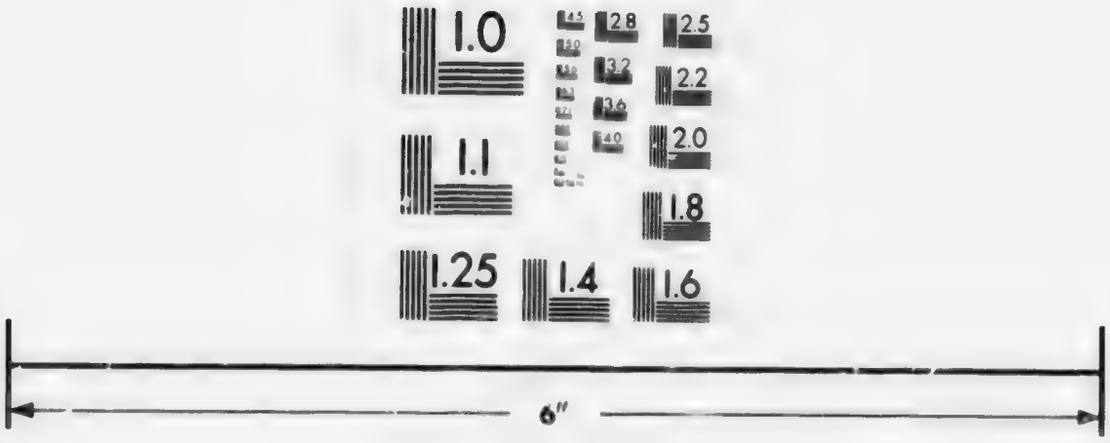
"To sing you the songs I used to sing,
And to tell you the tales of then,
Give the cheek as smooth, and the eye as bright,
The step as free, and the heart as light,
With the clustering curls — again!

"But, wife, I'll sing thee another song
On this eve of the wedding-day: —
Since the *first* we saw, full fifty years
Of shade and shine, of joys and cares,
Have passed, like a dream, away!

"Full fifty years! Why, it doesn't seem ten,
Since I held your hand that night,
And showed you the ring — yet I think you wrong
In saying I shook, for then was I strong —
But I mind how it twinkled in the light.

"Aye, fifty years! Let me think who was there
On the morn of that festal day, —
There was George, and Will, and Tom, and Lo,
And Henry, and Ben, and Sim, and Jo —
But now, ah! now, where are they?

IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)



Photographic
Sciences
Corporation

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503

"They are gone! — they are gone this many a year
  To happier scenes on high, —
Where three little doves of our own have fled;
And every leaf of the tree is shed,
  But twain withered ones — you and I!

"Where once was the lane and the willow well,
  Our loved old trysting tree,
The wide field of wheat, and 'Love's Retreat' —
A row of roofs and a dusty street
  Is all that we now may see!

"Then how can I sing you the young May song?
  We must hope for the new song above!
For, of all life's flowers not a bud is left,
And we stand like winter trees — bereft
  Of all that we loved, but Love."

THE FEATHERED EREMITE.

[LINES SUGGESTED ON SEEING A SOLITARY LITTLE BIRD, LATE ONE EVENING IN NOVEMBER, ON "REEF-MOUNT," A BARREN HILL NEAR HARBOUR GRACE, NEWFOUNDLAND.]

Contributed by W. C. St. J.

Orphan of a summer's sun!
Thou lonely little feathered one!
Tell me why thou lingerest still
Upon this bleak and barren hill; —
What secret spell, what tender tie,
Doth bind thee here to droop and die?
Is not the breeze which bore thee on
Its viewless wings, now past and gone?
And every tint of radiant dye
Displaced from yon deep canopy?
Turn thee, and view yon birchen vale, —
Where are the leaves that in the gale
Of eve were wont to shield thy form,
Or bathe thee with the dews of morn?

The grass now bends its blighted head;
The daisy 's crushed upon its bed; —
The bee is flown; — the May-fly — where?
The swallow sleeps, — yet thou art here!

Poor shadowy songstress! knowest thou not
That soon athwart this cheerless spot,
In fitful gusts oppressed with snow,
The cold and ruthless blast will blow?
That rail which bears thy scanty store
Will then refuse to yield thee more;
Nor in the fence, nor on the ground
One grain of food shall then be found.

O flee thee! flee thee, lonely one,
To lands where spring has just begun, —
To groves of spice, and luscious cane,
To chequered lawns, and fields of grain,
Where honey drops and scents distil,
And flowrets dip in every rill! —
Ah, no! it will not, cannot start;
Such thoughts fall heavy at its heart —
For though in other climes there be
Broad sheets of bloom, and songs of glee,
And ceaseless sighs of Zephyr, — still
This is its home — its native hill!

Then hie thee to the neighboring grove,
That spreads its dusky arms above,

And beckons to the faint and slow
To seek a solace for their woe;—
There, while the snow-drift piles around,
And winds assail with deafening sound,
Secure, thy little patriot breast
Shall find a refuge and a rest;
Some stunted branch or mossy spray
Will yield thee food from day to day.

Poor friendless nursling! doth thine eye
Survey yon dark and dreary sky?
And dost thou fear to take thy flight
Amidst the deepening shades of night?
Full well thou mayst — then come to me,
Come to my bosom and be free;
Free from Winter's pinching hand,
And from the hawk's malignant band;
Free from the wood-cat's fatal spring,
From all thy listless wandering.
No wire shall vex thy tender bill,
No cord repress thy wayward will;—
And soon as April's tepid shower
Lures from its bank the earliest flower,
With buoyant wing and joyous strain,
Thou mayst explore these wilds again.
Alas! it will not, will not stay,
From bank to bank it flits away.
In plastered halls, or papered nook,—
Man's lordly chain it cannot brook.

Then go, thou restless little bird!
Yet, ere we part, a passing word
May not be breathed in vain: —
Know, then, that from that clouded sky
There is a bright All-seeing Eye
Wide glancing o'er the plain, —

And though thick darkness should pervade,
Enrobing in its blackest shade,
This habitable ball, —
Yet hear a voice — (it comes from Heaven)
Which says — "Without permission, even
A sparrow cannot fall!"

THE LAST OF THE RED INDIAN WARRIORS.

[THE ABORIGINAL INHABITANTS OF THE ISLAND OF NEWFOUNDLAND, NOW AN EXTINCT RACE.]

Contributed by W. C. St. J.

THERE is a Chief in yon dark forest sleeping
All lone and silent in his bed of clay;
The breeze which o'er his swarthy breast is sweeping
Hath borne his name and lineage away;
His tent is down — his bow unstrung —
His arrow to the earth is flung.

Quenched is the lightning of his eye,
His arm is nerveless now;
No craven foeman may descry
The terrors of his brow.

O'er him no tear is shed,
Nor breathed one fervent sigh, —
But the sere leaf falls on the hallowed bed
Where the warrior's ashes lie.

No servile records glow
  With deeds that he had done,—
No sculptured emblems proudly show
  The laurels he hath won;—

But near that sacred mound,
  Three mouldering targets stand;
And the dart's unerring wound
  Points to the master's hand.

No classic yew is there,—
  No fragrant myrtle nigh;
But the alder scents the air,
  And the dark fir sweeps the sky.

Sleep on, then, warrior — sleep!
  Naught hast thou left behind;—
No widowed one to weep;
  No babe to woe consigned.

All, all is gone with thee,
  Chief of the swarthy breast!
Henceforth thy tribe shall wander free
  In the Forests of the Blest!

CLARIBEL:

A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG GIRL, WHO WAS DROWNED WHILE BATHING, AND WHOSE BODY WAS NEVER FOUND.

No fairer form than Claribel did Nature ever mould,
With her sunny eyes of azure and her wavy locks of gold!
And then her little ruby lips such pretty dimples wore, —
Like eddies on a rivulet with roses bending o'er.
Warm blushes on her velvet cheek kept never-ceasing chase —
New beauties, like auroras, ever flitted round her face!
So heavenly fair, this radiant maid might charm a cherub's eyes —
Nay, she seemed a pilgrim-spirit just alighted from the skies.
Now Claribel was wont to stray beneath deep, shady bowers,
Where the wild-birds warble love-notes and the zephyrs woo the flowers; —

And oft to gather silver shells that Ocean's bounty gave,
And press her glowing bosom to the bosom of the wave.
One rosy morning found her where the sea-nymphs love to keep
Their wild, fantastic revels on the surface of the deep —
When up from coral caves they come — an airy fairy band —
To lead their mazy dance along the unfrequented strand;
While others, in their scallop-shells, in graceful freedom glide,
With dishevelled tresses streaming down, like amber, on the tide; —
Around them sport the nautilus and creatures strange and rare,
While soft, Æolian murmurs seem to tremble in the air!
But all that strikes young Clara where her listless glances stray,
Are the rainbow-tinted morning-beams that o'er the waters play.
Then putting by her flowing robe, she glides the waves among,
And mingles, all unconscious, with the nymphs that round her throng.
All hand in hand, in circle linked, they gaze with jealous eyes,
On her free and fearless gambols with the billows as they rise.

And they love her for her beauty, though invading their
domain;
But the bowers and the flowers she shall never greet
again!
For round about her graceful form, their viewless arms
they weave —
And slumber steals her senses, while the rocking billows
heave.
Then sinking down together to their oozy ocean-halls —
The great deep closes over her, for aye, its crystal walls!

TO GENIUS.

I.

O Genius, mystic maiden! were it mine
To lure thee from thy native skies awhile —
To win one look of love or e'en a smile
Of condescending sympathy — to shine
One moment on my soul, as doth the beam
Of yonder crescent on the placid stream —
I would not ask for wealth or fame or power!
That instant favor would be ample dower
And marriage portion with my wedded muse.
Why art so coldly coy? Why still refuse
What is so small to give, so great to gain?
What, for this favor, must I pay? What pain
Endure? What Alp surmount? What depths explore?
Grant me a word — a smile — if nothing more.

II.

Sure, I have loved thee deeply — wooed thee long,
From morn to even, and from youth to prime; —
Bridging, with diamond hours, the stream of time,
That glittered but a while, like flecks of rime
Upon a brooklet of an autumn morn!

Had I an eagle pinion I would climb
The sapphire throne where thou dost sit and scorn
My wingless rage — and seize by force what still
Thou dost so lavish grant of thine own will
To other sons of earth and spirit born —
Thy favored ones, — to whom the sightless queen,
Dame Fortune, has no more propitious been
Than she has been to me, — since few are known
To whom this double favor has been shown.

III.

Oh, wilt thou not relent? Why still so cold?
How soon could'st thou transmute this clay to gold!
And ere the cloud could pass from Phœbe's face,
Her mellow radiance, when it comes, might beam
Upon another bard, whose envied place
In Fame's proud fane is only now a dream!
'T is thine to make *this* a reality,
E'en by a ray that can alone from thee
Proceed — one thought, original and deep,
That from thy suitor's pregnant brain might leap,
Minerva-like, full arm'd, the gods among,
And be one of them — ever great and young!
But vain the seige! Thy unrelenting breast
Is not so broken, and the spoil possessed!

FRAGMENTS

OF AN UNFINISHED POEM.

MORNING.

Morn wooes thee, Psyche, with his dewy lips
And warm, love-lighted glances. Let us forth
And pluck the earliest flowers for sacrifice —
Breathe the fresh gale, and banquet on a feast
Of loveliness; and purify our souls
In the full tide that freely flows for all!
Come forth; the lily yearns for thee; let not
The young rose languish for thy love,
Or violet complain thy tardy steps. —
They wait for thee, as maidens for the bride,
All tremulous with sympathetic joy,
And radiant each with coronals of dew —
Glowing with charms which thine alone transcend!
Be thou not slow to greet them and to swing,
With them, thy censer of sweet praise.

O'er the still foliage pours the golden Day —
Through purple vapors — like a billow borne
From some Atlantian source, and on the cliff
Of these tall trees, in spray effulgent, breaking
To dewy particles! And wand'ring thus,
My other self, thus hand in hand, with thee,
Beneath these elms, earth seems untenanted
By aught of human kind, save us. Heaven smiles
On Earth, which, like a beauteous babe, looks up
With azure eyes of loving confidence
And placid joy. The music that we hear
Of bird and insect, whispering wind and rill,
Is Nature's own melody — the oldest
Oratorio of earth — the newest —
The source of harmony — the symphony
That first in sinless paradise did float
To earth's first listening, whispering, lov'ng ones!

BEAUTY.

Spirit of Beauty, thou hast ever been
A presence round about me and a power!
From the first morning ray of consciousness,
My senses charming with thy mystic spell!
I feel thee near me wheresoe'er I go —
Thy soft words whisp'ring to my captive ear,

And so transfusing all thy soul in mine,
That all things speak of thee! Where art thou not?
Earth, ocean, air, and space illimitable
Thy domain! All things that God hath fashioned
Must be thine; but in all things to trace thee
Needs a pure vision and a soul sublime;
To love thee truly needs a heart all love —
Subdued, refined, and potent over sense!
There is a beauty Beauty doth enfold —
A presence felt, not seen — an effluence —
A soul that speaketh speechless things, as 't were
Through eyes innumerable, everywhere —
Which unperceived doth grant but little seen!

'T is not in harmony the most complete
Of color, form or sound, alone, we trace
The subtle soul of what doth live in such —
This life essential mocks e'en thought itself,
While drops the brush from hands incompetent; —
And which, once felt, the mightiest masterpiece
Of mimic art is but a failure still, —
The glowing canvas mirrors all but this!
And thus the loftiest minds die not of age,
Disease or want — they perish of despair!
All hearts, but theirs, are jubilant, — they move
Among us with a pensive mien and meek,
And seem to wither in the noon of fame!

JOY IN THE BEAUTIFUL.

There is an airy pleasure none may feel
But they into whose soul doth stream the joy
That quivers in the sunlight through the leaves,
That whispers in the merry mountain gale;
That dances in the bubble on the brook,
That glances from the dew-drop on the flowers, —
Ever floating from the clouds — ever gleaming
In the moonlight and the stars — ever living
In all lovely things of heaven and of
Earth! But words are vain to picture it
To souls that cannot see it as it is.
Oh, hast thou, after many, many days
Of dreary separation from the loved —
Cold glances meeting, and still colder hearts, —
Returned, — thy loved ones' arms around thee thrown,
Their beating bosoms pressed to thine — their eyes
Meanwhile, o'erflowing on thy cheek in tears
That speak a warmer welcome than their words
Of gushing love? If such were ever thine,
Then mayst thou guess, or dimly know, the joy
Of him who lives and loves the Beautiful
In her own bower, which is the Universe!

THE REST-DAY.

Oh, what a boon such hallowed hour as this!
When care and toil and strife, like dead loads, drop
Beneath the lethean wave, and leave the soul
In full possession of her dower of bliss, —
Peace, Love, and Contemplation, undisturbed!
We have too little time to be ourselves, —
To be what Heaven designed! Our rescued feet
Now press firm land, while all the week's long length
Our fragile barks have buffeted the storm
And battled with the wave! We have been chained
'Twixt murky walls; but this day we are free!
Oh, blessed emancipation! Not that I
Do scorn Toil's horny hand and sweating brow.
'T is well we have necessities; 't is well
That honest labor simple wants supply; —
For Sin and Woe — weird sisters of the Night —
Do claim one common sire in pampered Sloth!
Our bodies and our spirits have not lost
Their life elastic by the needful weight;
But, when the Rest-day rises with the lark,
We, with the lark, rise, too. We kiss sweet Sleep,
As, with a smile, she bears away our dreams —
The gorgeous furniture of Fairy-land! —
And, parting, bid her come again with eve.

We feel no inward pain — the recompense
Of midnight revelry; — no lava load
Belched forth by boiling passions unrestrained!
We rise from dreams of joyfulness to joys
That are not dreams, — the harmony of souls —
Sweet intercourse of minds -- converse with God
Direct or through his handiwork — to warm
And tender greetings — love's embrace!
A whole day resting on the lap of Peace!
No time unfruitful, for at morn we know
What every hour may bring. Not such his day,
The first half spent in sleepy, slipshod doubts
And drowsy resolutions, and the last
In fracture of them all; closed off at night
With unbecoming mirth or foul debauch,
Which either mind or body must repent
Through all the coming week with many a pang!

MEMORY.

Those dear, dim years! How oft the mind wings back,
And dove-like, hovers o'er them with regret —
A mild regret — a tear-compelling joy!
For they are gone — for ever — ever gone!
And peopling, thus, our visions with fair forms
That have no other being — we are lone!
How lone amidst the spectral multitude!

In seasons such as this, or oftener still
In the hushed twilight, when the stars come forth —
Familiar as old faces — one by one, —
The present fades — the past is present then!
We feel the pressure of a gentle hand,
We hear the accents of a well-known voice.
Sure, 't was but yester eve when last these eyes
Beamed on us as we wandered by the shore —
Or stream, hill, valley, forest, field, and plain —
In converse sweet with Nature; or reclined
Upon the lap of calm, domestic happiness, beside
The glowing log that cheered the winter night, —
As wisdom, wit or song the hours beguile;
One reading — while the rosy circle sat
In rapt attention — some old glorious bard,
Some episode in story, or some tale
Of bold adventurer to lands remote, —
Some sparkling scintillations of quick minds;
Some song that moves the patriot blood, or starts
The sympathetic tear. — Then comes the lull;
The Book of books is read; the evening hymn
Floats upward, and the "good-night" blessings given,
'Midst kisses showered round on old and young!

O Memory! thou art a sacred thing —
Thy mission holy! Thou art to our souls
A monitress — a messenger of good!
When on the border-land of Doubt or e'en
Full entered on the perilous path of Wrong —

Tempting the prize and eager the pursuit,
And dead to everything but one wild thrill
Of ravishment and madness — on we rush
To ruin! Then thou dartest swift and sure
An arrow from thy quiver: — p'rhaps some word
A dying mother whispered years ago —
Some long-forgotten counsel of a sire,
Himself well-nigh forgotten, — some warm tear
Dropped from a sister's eyelid on the hand
That pressed the last embraces — some deep gaze
Of a neglected love — some passion vow,
Long broken ruthlessly — some word, some glance,
Some prayer, some tear, some token, scene or thought —
O Memory, thou shootest to the heart
Direct, arresting its mad bounds, and leading
Back the prodigal to hope and heaven!

And Memory's quiver is not filled; each hour
Doth add a silver shaft. These happy days —
These fleeting moments of young love and life
Will be the mem'ries of a wintry age!
The time may come, perchance, when, old and worn,
Some morn like this will find us loit'ring here,
And as we mutual help our steps infirm,
These living hours will flicker o'er our minds —
Our sighs and tears uniting as we gaze
On each remembered scene: our trysting tree —
Our most frequented walk — our favorite view —
Our arbor-seat — and all — yea, all will come,
And be our memories then.

THOUGHTS ON DEATH.

THESE stately elms,
That with their affluence of living leaves
Bend o'er us in long vistas, seemed to be,
One moment since, the aisles and arches fair
Of Beauty's temple — suddenly have changed
To a most sombre pathway to the grave!
Behold the sign, where terminates this walk,
The sign and heraldry of monarch Death —
The pale, cold obelisk, the broken shaft,
The urn, the cenotaph, the tomb! Alas!
And is it so? And must it ever be?
Is Life no more? Must every pathway lead
To such an issue?

Pause a moment here,
To ask one question of the winds, the leaves,
The sun, the stream, the cloud, the flower, the dew.
Why on this being by my side hath Heaven
Bestowed such dower of beauty? Why such skill
In every part displayed — such symmetry
Without — such wondrous powers within — and all
To the minutest nerve, instinct with life
And loveliness so irresistible,
That, once beheld, each is the other's self —
Twain bodies, but one heart, one soul, one life, —

Why this? and why so evanescent made? —
This Feast of beauty, that our eyes ne'er tire
Of feeding on! This Goodness, so esteemed
That naught is good beside. This Tenderness,
That makes us jealous of the wooing wind,
And challenge with a frown the frowning clouds,
Lest but the faintest shade or gentlest breath
Might bear it injury — that it should fade
Like Autumn's leaf, and mingle with the dust!
Oh, why so wonderful and yet so weak!
Its sum of life, — a morning and an eve —
A day of tears and smiles, of clouds and shine!
This miracle of Being, for what end,
What purpose wrought?

The dew-drop trickles
To the sod and vanishes; the flower, too,
Fades away; the clouds float on; the streamlet
Whimples by; the sun moves toward his setting;
Silent fall the leaflets; and the zephyrs
Pass us but to sigh! —

Such, then, their answer!
Such the sole response! They breathed no promise —
Hinted no hope, and solved no problem dark!
But, as they passed, they pointed to the dust!

THOUGHTS IN CHURCH.

HARK! 't is the chime of Sabbath bells, that call
From many a sacred temple far and near.
Let us obey the summons; it is meet
Our pilgrimage should lead to such a shrine.
Here let us enter with the worshippers,
And yield up all our soul to holy thought;
For who dares come beneath the sacred roof
Unmindful of the mystic majesty
Enthroned? Pure Faith beholds no ground that is
Not holy, since His hand hath fashioned all,
Whose eye doth rest on all and sanctify:
Earth teems with altars as the heaven with stars!
But the vast tabernacle doth contain
A holiest of holies. Such is this —
Where only He in whom we live and move
And have our being, heeds the suppliant's prayer.
Courts are for kings, and castles for the brave;
Marts for the merchant, gardens for the gay;
Schools for the sophist, palaces for pride;
And halls for patriotic eloquence; —
But here — let each his sandals lay aside —
Forgetful of all else but *his own* sins,
God's injured laws, and Christ's atoning love.

How wonderful is prayer! that atom, I,
Can move the arm that moves the universe!

Beyond all reason; but, oh, blessed truth!
Not soaring faith beyond. There let it rest;
To reason is to doubt — to doubt is death!
Let Reason sleep, since Faith here reigns supreme.
But what is Faith? a queen in all the pomp
Of regal pageantry and power? Not so; —
Behold her yonder, pensive and serene —
Childlike, but majestic; weak, yet wielding strength;
Her mild eye measuring thy depths, Infinity!
A coronal of joy upon her brow;
Her robe all peace and spotless purity —
Transcendent Beauty borrowed from the skies!

How simple all the rites that Heaven demands,—
Love, Faith, Humility — a psalm, a prayer —
A sigh, a tear, a gush of holy joy!
An earnest, contrite heart — no less, no more!

Oh, could I sing one solemn, sacred hymn,
That, blending with some grand old melody,
Might swell and roll along these arches dim,
And fill with song, as with an incense-cloud,
This vast and venerable pile! Oh, could I pour —
As limpid water leaping from the rock
By Moses touched — these struggling thoughts confined,
Imprisoned in the soul! — these thoughts of God,
Of man, of time, and of eternity;
Of duty, love, and truth; of life and death;
Of ages past, of ages yet unborn! —

But no! 'T is not for me. Mine not the gift; —
The pains, but not the full fruition, mine!
Fitter for me to lay my hand upon
My mouth, and bow in speechless reverence;
And in a meek, submissive mood, award
All honor and all gratitude to those —
The voiceful ones, who all along the years
Have told us and interpreted our dreams!
Else had our spirits been disquieted;
And all our hopes been whelmed in waves of doubt!

WEALTH.

"Count out thy gains!" demands yon sordid wretch,
Who from the budding days of blooming youth —
Naught loving but himself, naught worshipping
But gold — who never smiled but when he gave
To others cause of tears — yea, from his youth,
Hath toiled, and ground, and cheated, until now —
A withered, shrivelled, staggering skeleton,
That with a coward eye and pond'rous key
Doth nightly sentinel a box of dross!
"Count out thy gains!" "Nay, count me thine!" I ask.
Then, with his long, lank finger, toward the chest
He points; and pointing, dies; and dying, fades
His gold, and his more golden years, for aye!

Can wealth do more than this? Yea, it can build
Voluptuous palaces, and summon earth,
Air, ocean, to administer to thee —
Where, clad in purple and in linen fine,
Bright youths may wait on thee, and maidens fair;
And sweet perfume, and dulcet melody,
And ruby wine, and viands rich and rare,
Await thy pleasure, and thy passions feed!
'Tis true. But there must come a time when these
Must fade before thine eyes, or cease to give
Aught else than pain and poignant, wild despair.
Can wealth do more than this? Yea, it can rear
A cenotaph, and write it o'er with lies,
That he who knew thee not in life,
May be deceived about thee for an hour!

LIFE.

They know not life who know not love — who feel
No yearnings from within for something more
Than passion craveth — fruit that ripens not
In solar rays; — for streams that have their spring
Deep hidden in the sacred heart of things!
To whom the flowers are not as sisters fair,
And stars their elder brothers, and the sweep
Of the wide universe their heritage
And fatherland! — who count earth all, and death

A desolation. Ah, they know not life
Whose life is breathing, and in what they deem
Most worthy of desire — fleshly lust
Of pleasure, wealth, and power!

Sweet sounds may tame
The heart that owns no law save its wild will;
But all the symphonies of Nature fall
On man's embruted ears as rain on reefs!

THE ANGEL-WHISPER.

How like this hour of twilight gloom the heart —
Beclouded much — a lone star glimmering —
And a faint, failing light — uncertain all!

Ah, yes; thou whisperest "Love, and faith, and hope."
My soul adores thee for that still, small voice.
Oh, let me drink the light of these sweet eyes
That gaze reproachfully in mine, and speak
A language learned from intercourse with Heaven!
Are there not seasons when the heart feels lone —
Deserted and abandoned in its need —
A sailless, helmless, manless, hopeless wreck!
Its precious freight — the labor-purchased fruit
Of many an anxious year — all left to drive

Uncared for to destruction? Looking round,
We see no pitying eye, no saving hand;
And then comes Doubt, and haggard-eyed Despair,
Extending, with her fleshless hand, the cup,
To poison all the fountains of the soul;—
And knowing what we are, and deeming what
We might have been—we seize the tempting draught!
And then—just then some angel-whisper comes,
With sweet words, breathing hope, and peace, and love!

MIDNIGHT.

'Tis noon of night; the solemn bell tolls forth
Its measured notes—the knell of yesterday!
And solemn still, though 't is the morrow's peal!
Fling wide the lattice; let the breath of heaven
Breathe on us while we muse. Hush every sound
Of light, unhallowed mirth; the lamp's bright glare
Shut out, as now the pensive spirit bows
In reverential exercise—uplift
Beyond the clouds! Yon spiritual worlds
That gem the brow of Night seem nearer to us now,
And glow because we gaze; and Heaven itself
More like our fatherland! Sweet, hallowed hour!
Time of great thoughts and fine imaginings!

When on the wings of Contemplation borne,
We rise o'er all the narrow bounds of sense,
And, without dissolution, taste the rich
Ambrosial food! The world is quite shut out—
Its wants and woes—its pomps and vanities
Do fade away; and each poor withering wreath,
That all our anxious life is given to gain,
Seems like the plaything of a greener age!
The very thought of earth is sacrilege—
Profane as revelry beneath the gothic dome
Of cloistered pile, where sainted relics rest!
Oh, fittest hour to launch upon the deep;
And, in our morn of youth, to float away!
Now, while no fevers burn, no pains distract,—
But gales auspicious fill our silken sail
And urge us onward to the realms of Day!

THE MISANTHROPE MELTED.

(A SCENE FROM AN UNFINISHED DRAMA.)

[SCENE. — A chamber in a villa on the banks of the Rhine. CARL, a young student, alone, playing on a guitar. TIME — Night.]

[*Enter* HENRI, *a fellow-student.*]

HENRI. Forgive me, Carl, for lo, I come like death —
Unbidden.

CARL. But welcome, Henri, welcome!
And therein unlike death. Welcome, good friend!

[*Lays aside the instrument.*]

HEN. Let not my harsh voice mar the melody
Of that sweet song — 't was it that tempted me;
Let not these notes grow silent on the string,
Still tremulous.

CARL. 'T was but a simple song,
My friend, scarce worth your hearing; — but to me
It brings fond memories — a childhood's tune —
A little lay, that quite unconsciously,
Whene'er I take my lyre, in dreamy mood,
I find me trilling.

HEN. Ah! a childhood's tune —
That wins thee back to all thy childhood loved!
'T is on such nights as this, when soft repose
Stills every murmur but the sighing gale,
And the pale moonlight ripples in the flood —
'T is in such hours we hover o'er the past —
Call up the shady spirits, and refresh
The fading memories of each hallowed scene; —
Embrace loved forms, and feel the smold'ring fires
Rekindling in the heart their ancient glow!
I know it, Carl. 'T is this that guides your hand
To strike a chord harmonious with your soul.

CARL. Aye, Henri, that 's the truth. But yet, how strange
The past should ever seem to claim so large
A portion of the mind! No present joy —
No future promise, be it e'er so great,
Can dispossess this despot of the heart!

HEN. A gentle despot, Carl, — a loving one —
Since he but gives us back our tears of joy —
Surrounds his throne with loveliness and light,
And banishes each grief; or, if one shade
Still lingers there, with most consummate skill,
He bids it soften some too brilliant ray;
And tears, too precious to be lost, transmutes
To pearls, that ever glitter in his crown!
A gentle despot, Carl, a loving one.

CARL. I feel him such, my friend, I feel him such —

[*Music is heard.*]

HEN. Hark!
CARL. The boatman's serenade.
HEN. How sweetly
Do the soft zephyrs waft it! dreamily —
Now swelling loud — now dying to a breath!

[*A pause.*]

There is a time, a place, for all things made, —
And when the moonbeam sleeps upon the flood,
Nature, herself, cries out for melody!
CARL. He was no idle dreamer who esteem'd
Her highest law was heavenly harmony.
HEN. No idle dreamer! Ah, but what a world
If man were not the only chord untun'd —
The jarring note that damns the noble song!
CARL. But who can say? A discord oft betrays
A master's hand, it makes the chords more sweet.
HEN. True, Carl; but know, when unskill'd fingers dare
To tamper with yon lyre, its silver strings
Give naught but dissonance! And yet, good Carl,
How much a generous soul may find to love,
E'en in this choir of untun'd instruments —
This world of evil men and —
CARL. What, my friend?
HEN. And women — too — too pure for most of them —
Like diamonds glittering in the baser clay; —
How much of beauty, truth, and heavenly joy!

CARL. And yet these words sound strangely from
your lips,
That moan, so oft, a melancholy dirge;—
You, Henri, who hath steeled yourself against
The soft seductions of this nether sphere!
HEN. True, Carl — but —
CARL. Ha! I see you blush!
HEN. Perchance
You may. I have, of late, had feelings strange,
With shadowy thoughts that somewhat shook my faith.
CARL. Your faith! Nay, Henri, your unfaith, you
mean;
What faith had you in aught of heaven or earth?
HEN. Well, be it so. I've been a sceptic, Carl—
Sceptic! — and yet — give me your hand, my friend —
And yet, methinks, 't was on the surface, all!
I tell thee, Carl, I was so like the earth
Which, say the sages, is one welt'ring mass
Of all-consuming fire, with but a thin
Pie-crust on which we human mortals creep!
My heart was all a-glow, though crusted o'er
With but a fragile rind of unbelief—
A filmy platform for my creeping doubts!
CARL. And so I often said!
HEN. And so I thought!
But pride, thou knowest, is so absolute!
Nay, all life long, these inner fires did glow;
And yet I aim'd to deem it were not so, —

Yea, strove to think my coldness did result
From deep philosophy!

CARL. Well, what dissolved
The spell, and broke this heart-surrounding rind?

HEN. A face.

CARL. A face?

HEN. A face — and then a word:
A face all beauty, and a word all love!

CARL. Nay; not a fair one's face?

HEN. Ah, more than fair!
Such words become not seraphim; — to speak
Their praises *just*, angelic words, alone,
Are fit; but knowing not the speech of heaven,
We dare not qualify their attributes
With poor humanity's imperfect tongue!
Oh, Carl! — I see a tear-drop in thine eye,
That azure heaven of sympathy, — thou knowest,
For thou hast felt what 'tis to love and deem
Thou art belov'd! The world to me is changed!
Flowers, fields, trees, stars, yon moon, and all I loved —
If I may call it love — seem sweeter than before!
And what I never loved — my fellow-race —
Doth wear an altered mien! A deluge, Carl,
Hath flooded all my soul! Heaven's windows oped!
The fountains of the great deep broken up, —
And, in the o'ertopping tide, the mountains sink;
And Love's fair ark swims o'er th' eternal tombs
Of error, doubt, malignity, and pride!

Thou seest not now the friend of former years
In him who grasps thy hand and pours
This language of deep passion in thine ears!
This beating heart — *here* lay your hand, my Carl —
This throbbing heart, that once was far too small
For e'en my selfish self, hath grown so great
That all mankind may find a haven there!
In loving one, I learned to love them all!

CARL. And this thou cam'st to tell?

HEN. All this — and more!
I told the listening winds, to ease my soul
Of her sweet weight of new-found ecstasy!
And now I will that you may share with me.

CARL. Most willingly!

HEN. This said, I go. This night
I meet my love beneath the linden tree!
Lean from this lattice; thou mayest dimly see,
Far down yon vale, o'er which a blue haze hangs
So dreamily, the spot — a fairy scene!
There is our trysting-tree! Wert ever there?
'T is worth a pilgrimage of fifty leagues
Through wind and rain, to see! Such lovely flowers!
Such tall, o'er-arching trees! Such velvet sward!
Such cosey little nooks for elfin sports,
And fairy morris-dancers, and for love
To wanton in, you never saw before!
And such a glorious night! But see, — the time
Creeps on apace! and I must go, ere yet
Yon amorous rose doth steal his shadowy arms

About his lily-love. Adieu, my Carl,
Adieu!

[*Exit* HENRI.]

CARL. Adieu! and Heaven smile on your joy!
How vast, how potent, how profound is love!
All conquering! Alike, that glorious morn
In Paradise, when Adam, waking warm
From blissful dreams, first saw his beauteous bride —
As now, this night, beneath yon linden tree!
The same in palace as in cot — amid
The hyperborian wilds as 'neath the vines
And sunny skies of Italy or Spain.
Thank Heaven, it is the same! There is no heart —
No matter who, or what, or where, or when —
Love hath not reach'd or may not reach — to melt.

MAIDEN LONGINGS.

What a beautiful eve, with its saffron sky,
  Its purple clouds, and its infant moon!
With a bright little star, like a lonely eye,
  Looking down on the calm lagoon—
Unruffled by aught but the wild-bird's wing,
As it dips, on her way to the Land of Spring!

Oh, could we, my love, with that lightsome bird,
  Forsake this region of fading flowers,
For climes where the sigh of the zephyr is heard,
  For ever in beautiful bowers!—
Where day, as thine eyes, may be cloudlessly bright,
With the dew, as my tears, falling softly at night;

Where lilies are kissing the crystal stream,
  And citron and cinnamon scenting the gales;
Where butterflies flit, and fireflies gleam,
  And turtle-doves coo in the vales;—
Where cold is a stranger, and tempest undreaded,
With Summer and Winter eternally wedded!

And yet, with thee and with those — what joy! —
  With thee and those beautiful skies!
And sure, to let fanciful longings destroy
  Such blissfulness, cannot be wise:
Nay; I will not — I will not repine any more!
Then, away, pretty bird, to thy destined shore.

NATURE AND ART.

The voice of music softly floats
  From yonder mansion grand,
Where haughty beauties in the dance
  Their gaudy wings expand.
They dream that they are happy now; —
  I envy not their bliss;
But would not for an age of that
  Exchange an hour of this: —

Through dim old woods, at will, to stray —
  O'er rugged mountains roam —
To muse by winding rivulets,
  Or where the billows foam; —
Wherever simple Nature speaks
  From loving heart to heart, —
Whose softest note is grander far
  Than all the pomps of Art!

DEATH AND THE WOODMAN.

"I'm weary of living," the woodman sighed,
As he tottered along the road;
"For the sake of a miserable crust of bread,
I'd rather, a thousand times, be dead,
Than carry this wearisome load!

"Come Death! come Death!" and down he sat
Upon his bundle of wood,—
"Come Death, and ease me of woe and want!"
And straight, a skeleton, grim and gaunt,
Beside the old man stood!

"Well, what do you wish?" the skeleton asked,
"For I heard you just complain."
"Oh, wish?" said the man, with a ghastly face,
"If you please, I wish you to help me place
This load on my shoulder again!"

THE TWIN TREES.

Two trees together grew,
And one was wide and tall and richly green;
The other gnarled, and of a sicklier hue,
And crooked, dwarfed, and mean.

They blossomed side by side —
Increasing, fading, leafing, year by year;
The fairer one was fruitful, and his pride
Who nourished it with care.

The barren tree was left
To Nature's keeping — thrive as best it may —
Until at length it seemed of life bereft
And hast'ning to decay; —

Then, deemed no longer worth
The space it occupied, the woodman came,
With implements, to rid it from the earth
And yield it to the flame.

But ere he struck, a bird,
That 'mong the sapless branches built her nest,
Began to sing, which when the woodman heard,
Compassion fill'd his breast!

"I dare not touch this tree!
To thee, sweet innocent, it doth belong;
By man neglected, Heaven hath given it thee,
Thou pretty child of song!"

Should this not teach the mind,
That what doth seem *no* bounty to impart,
May be, for Heaven's high purposes, designed
To bless some secret heart?

TO A JUG.

[ON CHANGING HIS RESIDENCE, THE AUTHOR DISCOVERED THIS FAMILY RELIC IN A DUSTY NICHE, THEREUPON SUGGESTING THE FOLLOWING SERIOUS REFLECTIONS.]

'Hail, ancient Jug! from matted cobwebs come,
  And dust of many long-departed years!
I would converse with thee: wert thou not dumb,
  How gladly to thy glib I 'd lend mine ears,—
For many things as yet untold, I ween,
And passing wonderful, thy life hath seen!

Some episodes that no historic page
  Hath ever shown, alas! and ne'er may show;
Some wild romances of a by-gone age,
  That needy novelist might sigh to know!
Oh, for the wizard power, like one of old,
To break thy silence, and thy tale unfold!

Although thou art a jug, and rather frail,
  Thou hast survived at least two hundred years;
While mighty potentates, in coats of mail,
  Have passed away, with all their hopes and fears.
'T is strange to think a jug for holding water
Should outlive kings, who live by gold and slaughter!

Yet, here thou art! memorial of the past —
  A quaint old fragment of a quaint old world! —
That hath defied rude Time's remorseless blast,
  While more stupendous fabrics have been hurl'd
Back to the nothingness from which they sprung —
By blood and sweat from human sinews wrung!

Hadst thou the gift of tongues 't were thine to tell
  Most entertaining things of Shakspeare's time;
Or tales of days ere Paul's cathedral bell
  Began to ring or Spencer 'gan to rhyme!
Doubtless of Cromwell's deeds thou wert aware, —
What *then* thy master, roundhead or cavalier?

From all these bas-relievos on thy side
  Of burly bacchanalians, I wist
He was not to the Puritans allied,
  But rather was some roist'ring royalist:
Who knows but Charles the Second, when pursued,
May, from this rim, have quaff'd the country-brewed!

Strange things have happened since it could be said
  That thou wert young, — surprising is the change!
What now is commonplace, the wildest head
  Of your day never dreampt. Could I but range
O'er half *we* do, you'd judge me mad or dreaming, —
You have not heard of telegraph and steaming?

Why, voyages that took your tars, at best,
  Six weary months, may now be done a week in, —
For, lo, we light our pipes in farthest west,
  And knock the ashes out, almost, in Pekin!
We have a wire by which Columbia spoke
Across the seas to Albion — then, broke!

In sooth, 't would take a life-time to unfold
  The roll of wonders or a sketch to show forth —
Of exhibitions, pyramids of gold,
  French revolutions, battles, gas, and so forth;
Such things as e'en your poets never sung:
The world was in her teens when you were young!

TOO LATE!

Too late to plant the tender seed,
  The sowing time is past;
Too late to prop the fading vine
  That feels the wintry blast!
Too late to rear a temple now,
  The building time is o'er;
Too late to shift the rudder now, —
  I hear the breakers roar!

Too late to gather fruit again,
  The orchard trees are bare;
Too late to search the fields again,
  The gleaners have been there.
Too late — alas! — to win me back
  My long-neglected love!
Too late — ah, no — not yet too late
  To hope for rest above!

IN AFFLICTION.

Assist me, Lord, to place my trust
  In thee, from whom my being came!
Thy Hand is merciful though just, —
  In every age and clime the same; —

It hath my falt'ring steps sustained
  When gathering shades obscured the Truth;
And, in Temptation's hour, restrained
  The wild impetuous will of youth.

Thou hast my daily wants supplied
  With daily bounties from above;
And what to me hath been denied
  Thou didst withhold alone in love.

May Faith's pure beam be ever bright, —
  My soul to cheer, my doubts to chase;
And, in Affliction's weary night,
  To trust Thee where I cannot trace!

THE LAST LAY.

No more the Muse may tempt him —
  This lay shall be the last;
For sterner themes await him, —
  The flowery age is past!
And yet, he loves to linger
  In the bower beside the stream;
He loathes to be awakened,
  So soon, from Beauty's dream.

But life 's no rosy vision,
  No gleesome holiday;
Old Time 's a testy master,
  That brooketh no delay.
O'er Fortune's favored children,
  The Muse may spread her wing, —
The rook must ever labor,
  And Philomela sing.

The spirit doth but tenant
  A temple on the sand,
That needs a constant keeping,
  An ever-working hand;

And earth will yield no harvest
  Where seed has not been sown, —
Who asks for bread unpurchased
  By toil, receives a stone.

The day has not yet risen
  When Mind alone shall sway;
The soul must still be shackled
  To this body of decay;
And, like a lonely convict,
  Must labor on and hope,
Till some kind spirit cometh,
  The dungeon-door to ope!

Though Fortune chain the body,
  She cannot chain the mind, —
'T will soar through gorgeous cloudland,
  'T will angel-sisters find!
Then let this be the solace
  Of him who hangs his lyre
On the willow, — that for aye
  Still burns the sacred fire!

L' ENVOI.

I.

Go forth, my little book! go forth alone —
  I may not journey with thee; thou must be
Thine own protector! Let thy youth atone
  For aught of imperfection friends may see
Within thee! Much in sorrow hast thou grown
  And much in joyfulness, — till thou of me
Became the counterpart, and ever true —
Showing upon thy face each varied hue.

II.

My frequent solace through long, weary years
  And solitary hours, — and when to pour
Such wayward thoughts as vagrant Fancy bears,
  My only pleasure! Now, these seasons o'er,
The dead Past, with her changing beam, appears
  A broken rainbow arching a dim shore!
And yet I would not quench this feeble flame,
Though hopeless of youth's hope — a poet's fame!

III.

Strange thoughts have visited my soul, like sails
  Upon the far horizon's misty verge;
But, anchorless, they passed;—the gales
  Of cold reality arose — the surge
Of Life's unrest — that over all prevails,
  Till the torn bark in heavenly seas emerge, —
Swept wildly o'er them; and the clouded night
Came swiftly onward, hiding all from sight!

IV.

The sunbeams dart through myriad leagues of space
  As dark as Erebus, until they fall
Upon some lonely world, that lifts her face
  In glowing gratitude, — and so to all
Come beams from heaven; but finding, oft, no place
  To rest upon — no mind prepared — the pall
Of dead obscurity still wraps them round,
And the Promethean limbs remain unbound!

V.

For such, there is no refuge but to dream,
  And to be scorned for nursing plants that bear
No fruit; — to grasp at things that only *seem*
  Deliverers — cloud-castles hung in air, —

And vain, delusive fires, that brightest gleam
When the most faithless ways they lure you
near; —
To chase the Rainbow for the gold that lies
Beneath her foot, — yet ne'er to find the prize!

VI.

But I have learn'd to see my castles fall
Without a sigh, — Time teaching me to build
Yet others — belted with a firmer wall
Than clouds; and, if not lofty, safe, and fill'd
With what doth grant a deeper joy than all
The unsubstantial fantasies that thrilled
The youthful spirit, flitting o'er fair flowers,
In that fresh, rosy morn of dreamy hours!

VII.

Go, then, my little child! Ah, once there dwelt
Beside me one I hoped to please — whose praise
Was dearer far, whose mild reproof more felt
Than all, — ADA, my sister! Thy bright days
How brief! And still I see thy sweet eyes melt,
As erst, benignly o'er these youthful lays; —
I hear thy wise suggestions — lending power —
Touching with livelier hues each modest flower!

VIII.

How much I owe to thee! — From that still time
Of starlight, when, as tendrils twined, we stood, —
Silent or sighing — drinking the sweet chime
That trembled from the spirit-land — a flood
Of melody, that whispered of the clime
Where now thou ever livest with the Good!
Yes; thou art gone with this fond hope! But Heaven
A surer Trust and holier Hope hath given!

IX.

Go, then, my little one! I bid thee go!
What to thy sire thou mayest return is naught, —
If thou shouldst cause an earnest tear to flow;
Or plant in any mind a nobler thought;
Or chase one wrinkle from the brow of woe! —
No more he seeks, nor deems this vainly sought.
Then go! — while cherish'd thoughts of thee shall dwell
Long in his heart who bids thee now — Farewell!